

GOODNIGHT PUNPUN



2

INIO ASANO

PARENTAL ADVISORY
EXPLICIT
CONTENT

GOODNIGHT PUNPUN

2

Story and Art by INIO ASANO





GOODNIGHT PUNPUN

Part Three

CONTENTS

STORY THUS FAR...

Punpun, somehow, has become an unexceptional middle school student.

CAST OF CHARACTERS



PUNPUN ONODERA

Formerly known as Punpun Punyama
A choco pie-loving young man.



MAMA ONODERA

Punpun's mother. Her personality remains unchanged post-divorce.



YUICHI ONODERA

Mama's younger brother. Thirty-three years old. Lives with Punpun.



AIKO TANAKA

The girl Punpun loved in elementary school. They have had absolutely no contact for two years.



KOMATSU

Punpun's classmate. A proud natural righty and member of the badminton team.



SEKI

Punpun's classmate. Has a slightly alcoholic father



SHIMIZU

Punpun's classmate. Childhood friend of Seki.



THIS GUY

Varsity member of the badminton team.



YUGAMI

The lawyer who handled Mama's divorce.



GIRL IN THE COFFEE SHOP

Uncle Yuichi thinks he remembers her from somewhere.?

Chapter 24 5

Chapter 25 21

Chapter 26 37

Chapter 27 53

Chapter 28 71

Chapter 29 87

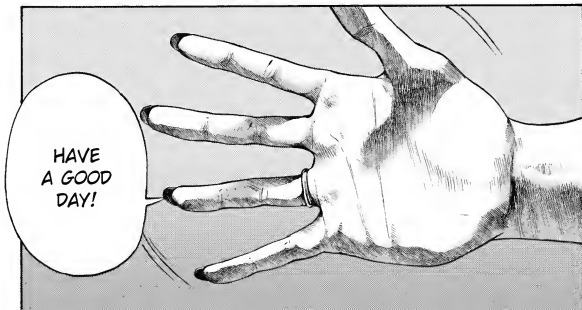
Chapter 30 105

Chapter 31 127

Chapter 32 143

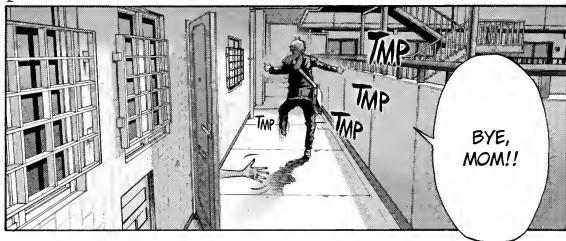
Chapter 33 161

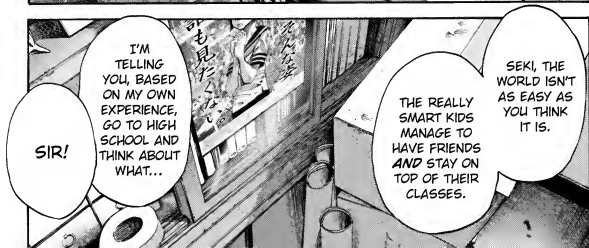
Chapter 34 181





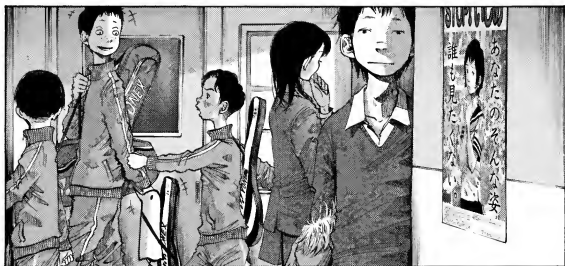
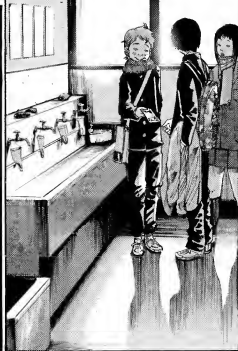
2















I'M SORRY,
I'M SORRY!
IT'S ALL
MY FAULT!

DON'T
BLAME
ABE!



S-
SEKI!

SEKI,
SEKI!

THAT'S
NOT
WHAT
I'M
TALKING
ABOUT!



THAT'S
NOT IT...
AAARGH!

IF YOU
THINK
ABOUT
IT, IT'S
OBVIOUS.
AARGH!



I DON'T
CARE THAT
YOU'RE A
GIRL.

YOU'RE
NEXT.

I
DON'T
EVEN
KNOW
WHAT'S
GOING
ON...

YOU'RE,
LIKE, *SO*
GROSS!!

HA HA.
WHY...?

I WAS
JUST, LIKE,
WATCHING.

WHO

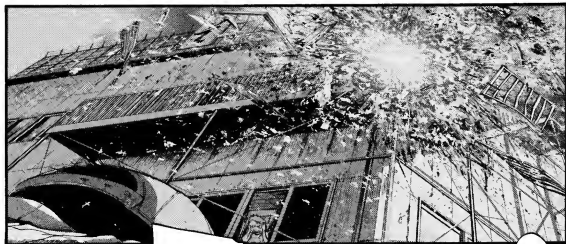
ACTUALLY,
SO
PATHETIC.

THAT'S
SUPPOSED
TO SCARE
ME?

LIKE,
SUPER
PATHETIC
...

SHK
SHK
SHK

IT'S
LIKE,
WHAT
ARE YOU
EVEN
TALKING
ABOUT?



HA HA HA!
SERIOUSLY?!
HOW
PATHETIC!!

HE'S
AFRAID OF
A LITTLE
FLAME!!

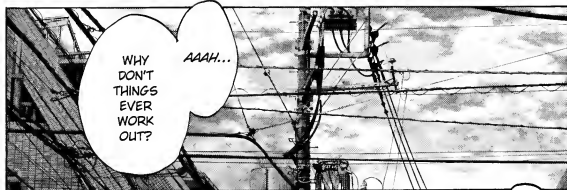


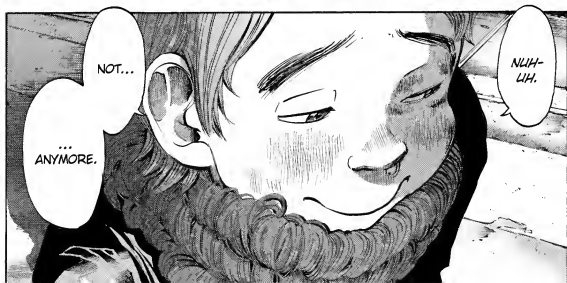
HUH?
...

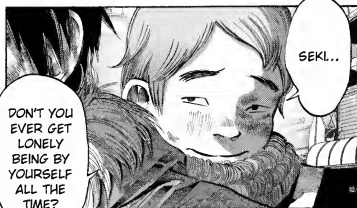
WHAT?

WHAT
IS IT?









SEKI...

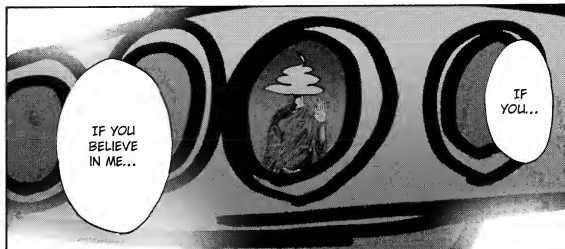
DON'T YOU
EVER GET
LONELY
BEING BY
YOURSELF
ALL THE
TIME?



PEOPLE
JUST NEED
TO RELY
ON THEM-
SELVES.

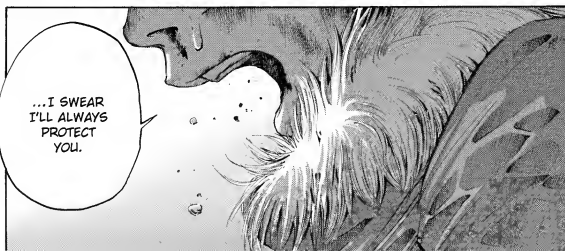


I
FIGURED.
IF GOD
ACTUALLY
EXISTED,
THE WORLD
WOULDN'T
BE LIKE
THIS.



IF YOU
BELIEVE
IN ME...

IF
YOU...



...I SWEAR
I'LL ALWAYS
PROTECT
YOU.

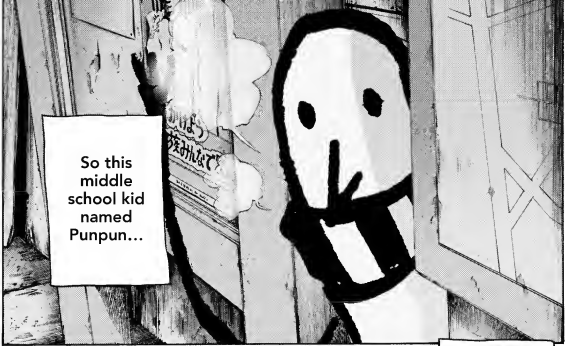
I DON'T
WANT TO
BE ALONE
ANYMORE...



OKAY.



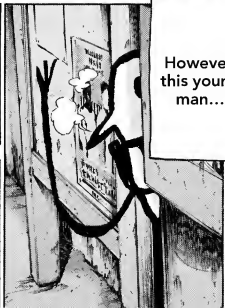




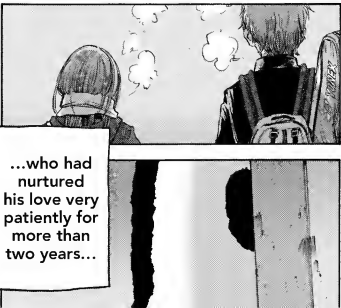
So this
middle
school kid
named
Punpun...



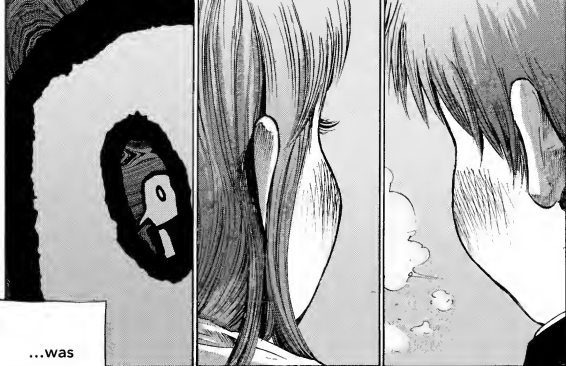
...firmly
believed
that Aiko
Tanaka, the
girl with the
small warm
hands, was
his destiny.



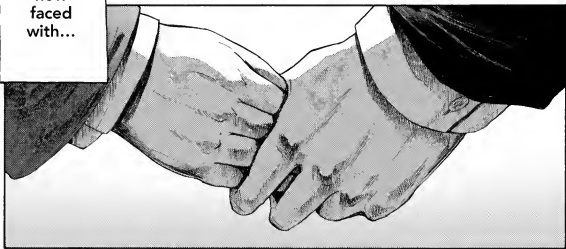
However,
this young
man...



...who had
nurtured
his love very
patiently for
more than
two years...



...was
now
faced
with...



...an
immutable
fact!



**It's
hell!**



AAAAH...
I'M SO
TIRED...

I'M
HOME!!

YUICHI,
WHERE'S
DINNER?

MAMA ONOZUKA
PUNPUN
YUICHI



WHERE'S
PUNPUN?!

HE'S BEEN
IN HIS ROOM
EVER SINCE
HE GOT
HOME FROM
SCHOOL.

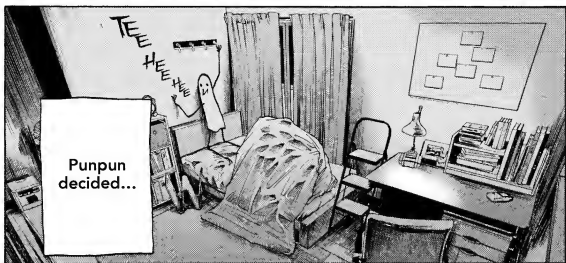
AS YOU
CAN SEE,
I'M MAKING
IT RIGHT
NOW.



HAVE
YOU BEEN
DRINKING
AGAIN?

WHY IS
HE SUCH A
DOWNER? HE
BRINGS ME
DOWN TOO!

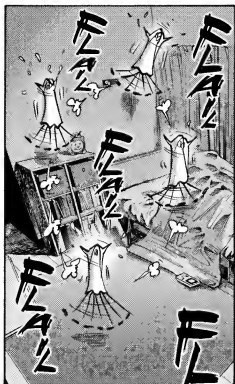
GEEZ,
THAT
KID!



But
that was
impossible.



...to
pretend
that he
hadn't seen
what he
saw.



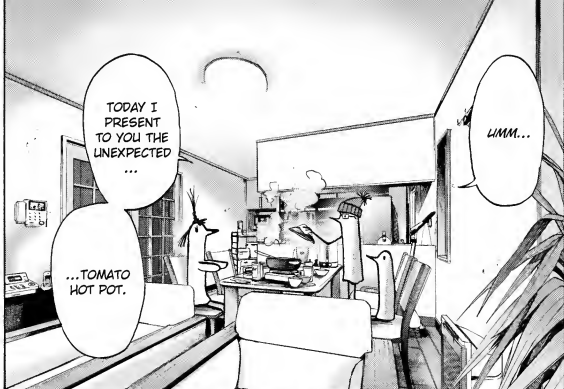
Punpun
decided
to forget
everything.

"If Aiko
is happy,
that's
all that
matters..."



That was
impossible.





TODAY I
PRESENT
TO YOU THE
UNEXPECTED
...

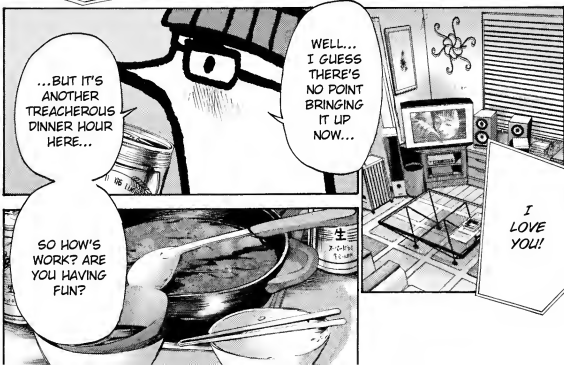
Ummm...

...TOMATO
HOT POT.



...I
REALLY
LOVE
YOU!

OH...
OHH,
I...



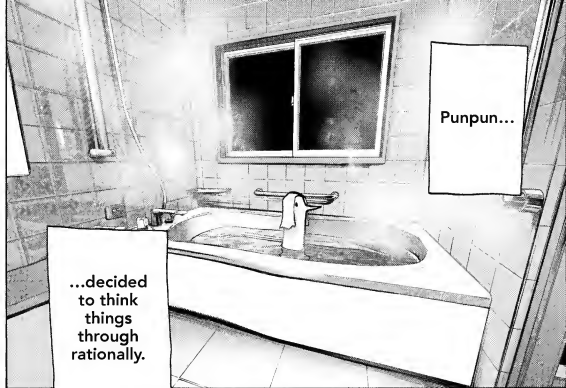
...BUT IT'S
ANOTHER
TREACHEROUS
DINNER HOUR
HERE...

WELL...
I GUESS
THERE'S
NO POINT
BRINGING
IT UP
NOW...

SO HOW'S
WORK? ARE
YOU HAVING
FUN?

I
LOVE
YOU!

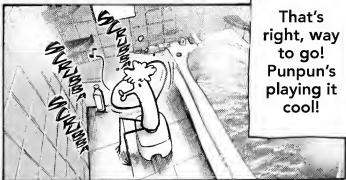
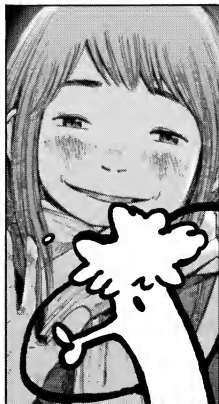




...decided
to think
things
through
rationally.

Punpun...

There was no
positive proof
that Aiko and
Yaguchi were
going out!



That's
right, way
to go!
Punpun's
playing it
cool!

That's
right,
Punpun's
super-
cool!

"Even if they
are going out,
there's no way
Aiko is that
into Yaguchi!"



"I wonder
if Aiko has
done stuff like
kissing
already."



Punpun,
be cool.



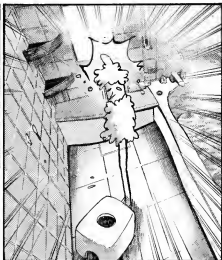
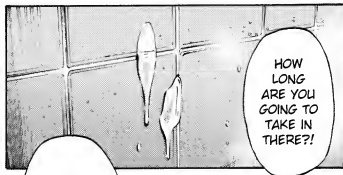
"Maybe
they've
already
had
sex...!"



Be cool,
Punpun!



Be
cool!!





HOW
CONSCI-
ENTIOUS
OF HIM...

...WRITING
YOU ABOUT
HIS BORING
LIFE EVERY
MONTH
WITHOUT
FAIL.

OH YEAH,
THERE'S
A LETTER
FOR YOU.



Mr. Pupun Onodera



It
ended
in the
usual
way.



The letter was
from Pupun's
dad, who had
returned to
Fukushima
Prefecture and
was working as
a security guard
at the water
department.



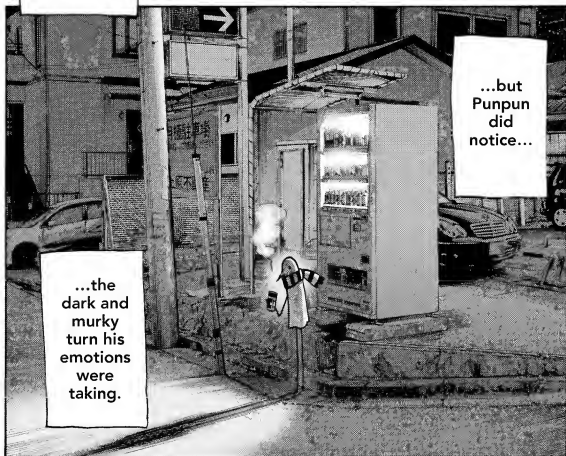
It covered
the usual
banal
subjects—
the Yomiuri
Giants and
outer space.

...and the
silence
stabbed
deep into
Punpun's
ears.

The winter
sky was
crystalline
...



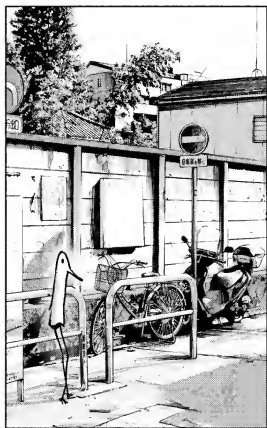
Actually,
he had no
idea what
good coffee
tasted like...

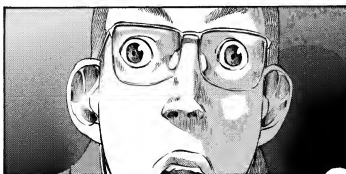


...but
Punpun
did
notice...

...the
dark and
murky
turn his
emotions
were
taking.









YOU'RE THE
ONE WHO SAID
WE SHOULD
ALL GO AWAY
FOR SPRING
BREAK.

SERIOUSLY,
HURRY UP
AND DECIDE!



BRRR
...

IT'S
SO
COLD.

I SHOULD
HAVE GONE
TO PRIVATE
SCHOOL.



I NEED
TO GO TO
PRACTICE...
CAN I DO
IT TOMOR-
ROW?

OH
GEEZ!!





...
SHALLOW
BOYS LIKE
THAT.

I'M NOT
INTERESTED
IN...



I WASN'T
ASKING
ABOUT THAT,
YOU IDIOT!



MAYBE HE'S
DOING IT WITH
ALL OF THEM.

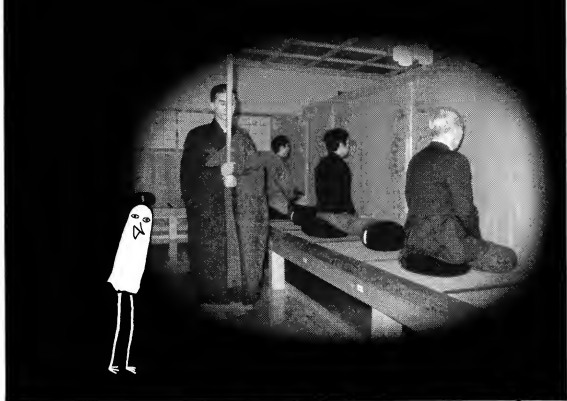
HE'S GOT
A LOAD OF
FIRST-YEAR
FANGIRLS...



...GOING OUT
WITH AIKO
TANAKA?

OH...

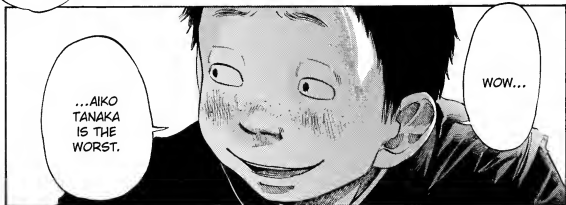
BUT ISN'T
YAGUCHI...

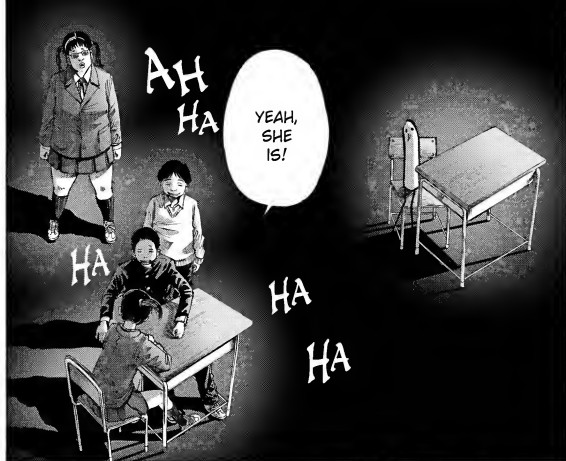


SOMETIMES I USED TO GET IRRITATED THAT SHE NEVER OPENED UP.



THE TWO OF
THEM ARE
PROBABLY
JUST GOING
AT IT ALL
THE TIME.







OH,
OKAY.

SEE
YOU
LATER.

Punpun...



HUH?

AREN'T
YOU
COMING TO
PRACTICE,
PUNPUN?



...didn't
want
to be
around
anyone.



COWARD!



"Aiko is not the worst."

...Punpun said to himself.





Punpun was
sure that
Yaguchi was
leading Aiko
astray.



As Punpun
was filled with
a dark mist...



...seemed
to fade
and
recede...

...his
memories
of Aiko
from two
years
ago...



I
Want to
Smooch
you again!

I
Want
to hold
hands
with
you
again!

I
Want
to talk
to you
again!

I want
to see
inside
your
panties
...!

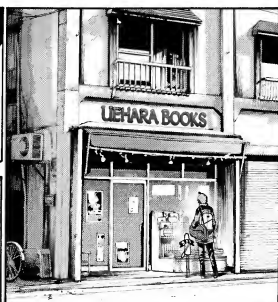


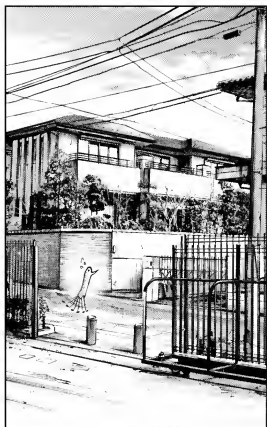
AKES
OUR
VES



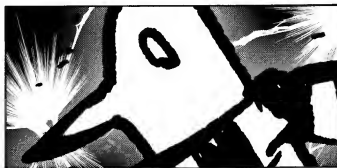
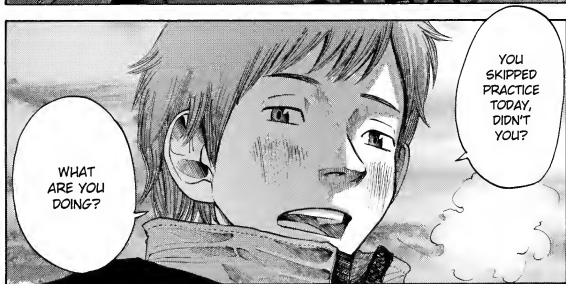
SPE
REP













WE ALL
HAVE OFF
DAYS...



I
GET
IT.



WELL...



UHH,
SORRY...

...YOUR
NAME'S
NOT OZAWA,
NOT ODA-
JIMA...

...
ONODERA!

SERIOUSLY,
DUDE, YOU
AREN'T VERY
MEMORABLE.

IF
YOU NEED
TO BUY A
MAGAZINE, I
CAN WAIT OUT
HERE.

LET'S
WALK
TOGETHER.

YOU ON
YOUR WAY
HOME,
ONODERA?

I'VE GOT
A THING TO
DO OVER
THAT WAY.

NO
RUSH.

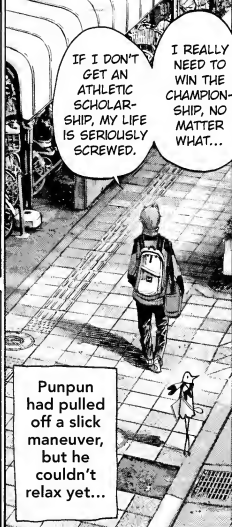
I SUCK
AT STUDYING.
BADMINTON HAS
BEEN MY THING
SINCE I WAS
IN ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL...

...GETTING
SOMETHING
LIKE THAT...

HEY, YOU
MUST BE
SMART...

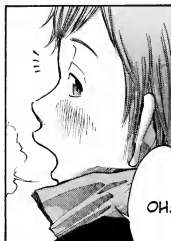


...because
this guy was
trying to
lead Aiko
astray.



IF I DON'T
GET AN
ATHLETIC
SCHOLAR-
SHIP, MY LIFE
IS SERIOUSLY
SCREWED.

I REALLY
NEED TO
WIN THE
CHAMPION-
SHIP, NO
MATTER
WHAT...



OH!



Obviously,
he's
scum!

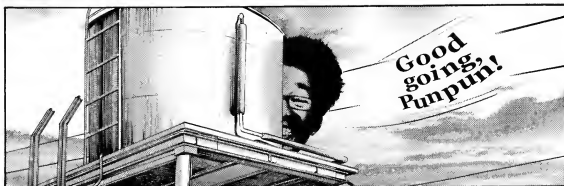
Punpun
had pulled
off a slick
maneuver,
but he
couldn't
relax yet...



Whoa,
that was
close!

A
narrow
miss!

He
almost
got
stabbed
when he
turned
around!

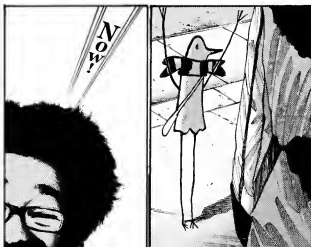


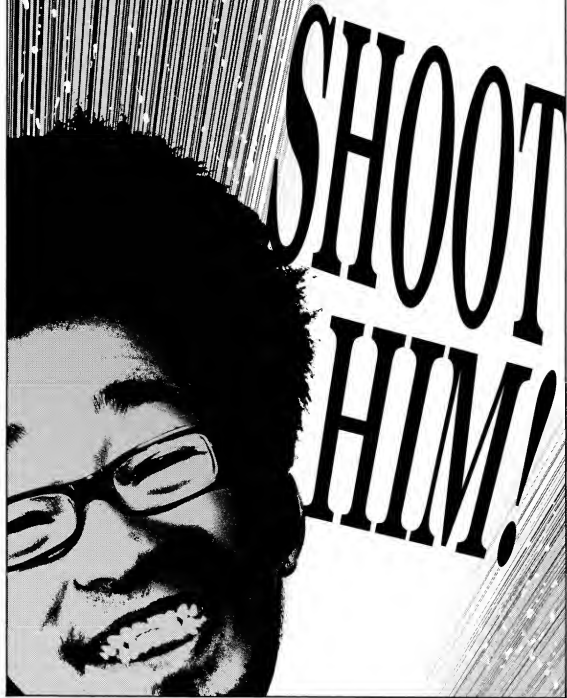
Good
going,
Punpun!

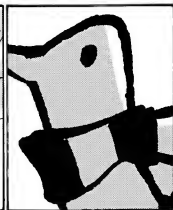


MIND IF
I GRAB
SOMETHING
TO DRINK?

SORRY
...









I GUESS
I COULD MAKE
MORE OF A
FUSS, BUT
THEY SEE ME
AS A LIGHT-
WEIGHT...

...SO
THEY DON'T
TAKE ME
SERIOUSLY
EVEN THOUGH
I'M THE BEST
OF THE
SECOND-
YEARS!

I FEEL
BAD THAT
YOU GUYS
HAVE TO
DO BORING
DRILLS...

...BUT THE
CAPTAIN
AND THE
MANAGER
ARE SO
RIGID ABOUT
THINGS LIKE
TRADITION
AND
HIERARCHY.



BUT
SERIOUSLY
...



YOU SHOW
HIM ONE
THING AND
HE ABSORBS
TEN OR
TWENTY, YOU
KNOW?

KOMATSU
FROM
FIRST
YEAR IS
AMAZING...

WHEN I
THINK ABOUT
HOW HIS NATURAL
ABILITY IS MAKING
ALL MY EFFORT
SEEM ABSOLUTELY
WORTHLESS...

NO

NO

HE'S
SERIOUSLY A
BADMINTON
GENIUS.





...AND BECOME
A STAR ATHLETE,
I'D BE HAPPY NO
MATTER HOW THE
REST OF MY LIFE
TURNED OUT.

I
THOUGHT
IF I COULD
RACE UP THE
NATIONAL
JUNIORS
TOURNAMENT
RANKS...

...I'VE
BEEN
TRYING
SO
HARD.

I
HONESTLY
WONDER
WHY...



I'M JUST
A PRETTY
AVERAGE
GUY.

BUT IT
TURNS OUT
I'M NOT
ACTUALLY A
GENIUS.



LET'S TALK
ABOUT
SOMETHING
ELSE.

OH,
SORRY
TO GO
ON LIKE
THAT!
NEVER
MIND!

...MAYBE AN
AVERAGE GUY
WOULD BE
HAPPIER WITH
AN AVERAGE
GOAL?

YOU
KNOW...



I...

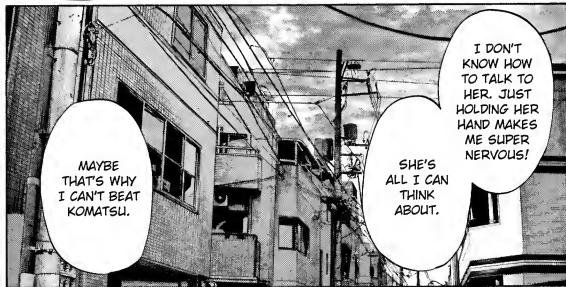


DO
YOU LIKE
ANYONE,
ONODERA?



...
RECENTLY
GOT MY
FIRST
GIRLFRIEND.

ACTU-
ALLY,
I...



MAYBE
THAT'S WHY
I CAN'T BEAT
KOMATSU.

SHE'S
ALL I CAN
THINK
ABOUT.

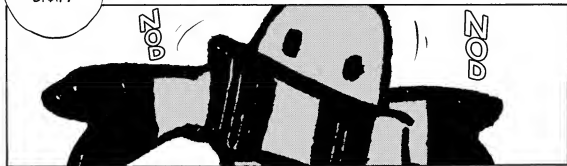
I DON'T
KNOW HOW
TO TALK TO
HER. JUST
HOLDING HER
HAND MAKES
ME SUPER
NERVOUS!



IT GOT
DEPRESSING
AGAIN!

GYAACK!
SORRY!







Yaguchi's
smile
reminded
Punpun of
Harumi, a
friend from
long ago.

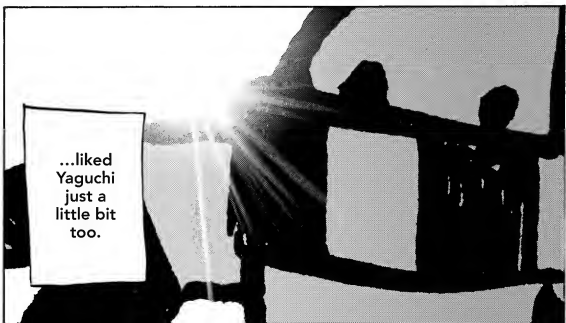


Even so,
Punpun
loved
Aiko.

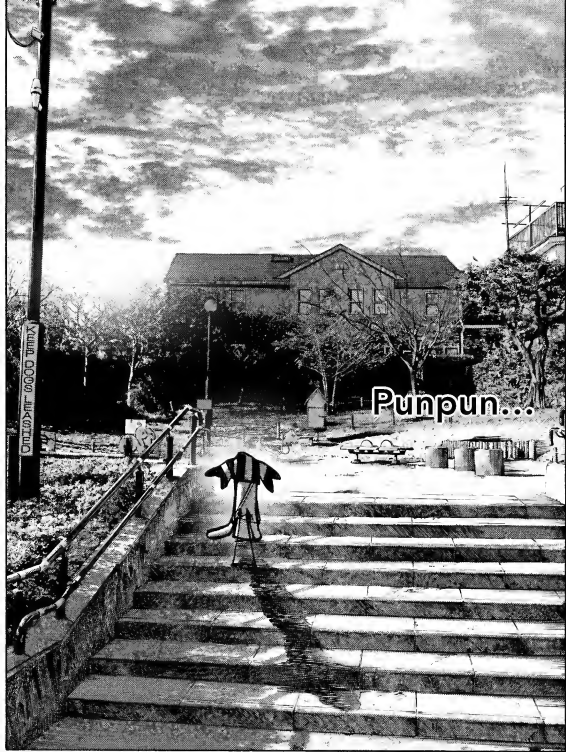
The
girlfriend
that
Yaguchi
had
referred
to was
probably
Aiko.



And
Punpun...



...liked
Yaguchi
just a
little bit
too.

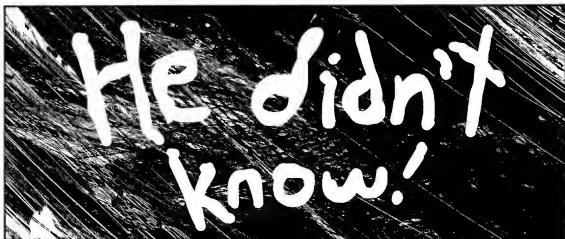


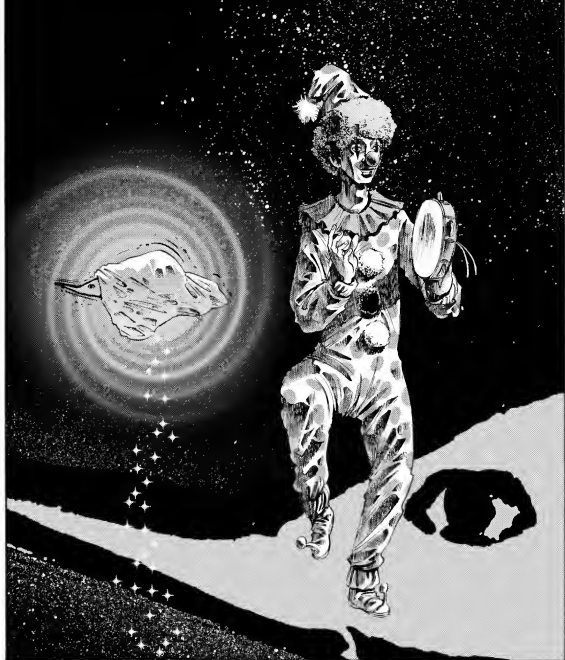
...but Punpun
wondered who
would welcome
his love.

...wanted
Yaguchi to find
happiness, no
matter how
modest...

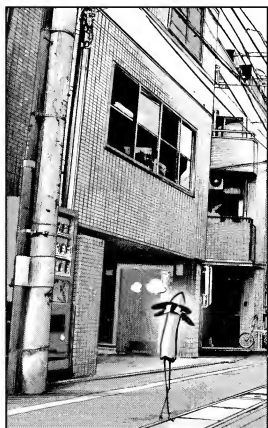


He
didn't
know
what
to do
anymore!











Punpun,
you're
a good
kid.
It
makes
me want
to puke.

One person's
happiness
is built
on the
misfortune
of others.

DO you
really think
it's possible
for everyone
to be
happy?

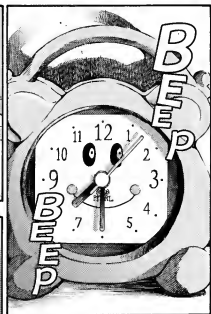
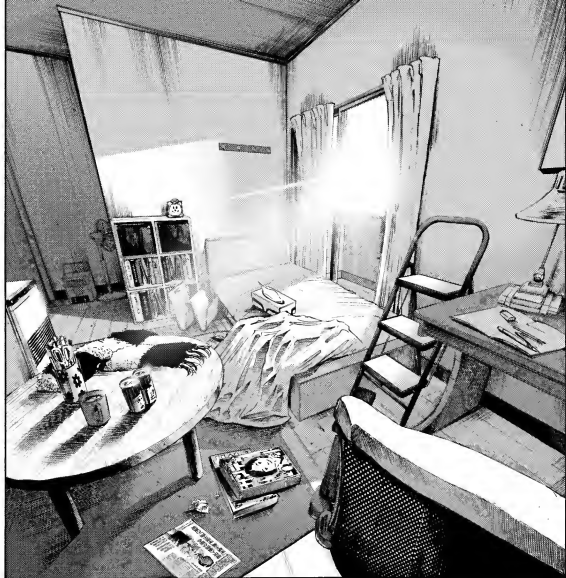
...do you know
the best way
to keep from
getting hurt
by other
people?

Hey,
wimpy
hypocrite
Punpun...

No matter how good
you are, you still
inadvertently hurt
other people. Or are
you saying that
you're strong enough
to take on the
entire world's
sadness?

Kill
them
first.

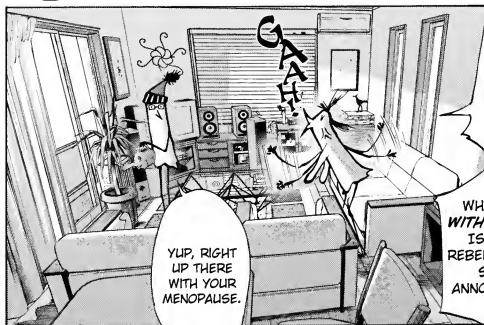






PUNPUUUN!

YOU'RE
GOING TO
BE LATE
FOR
PRACTICE!



HE
TOTALLY
IGNORED
ME!

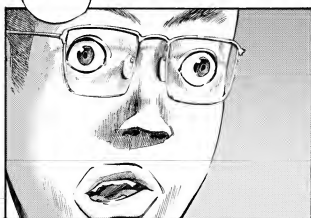
YUP, RIGHT
UP THERE
WITH YOUR
MENOPAUSE.

WHAT'S
WITH HIM?!
IS HE
REBELLING?
SO
ANNOYING!

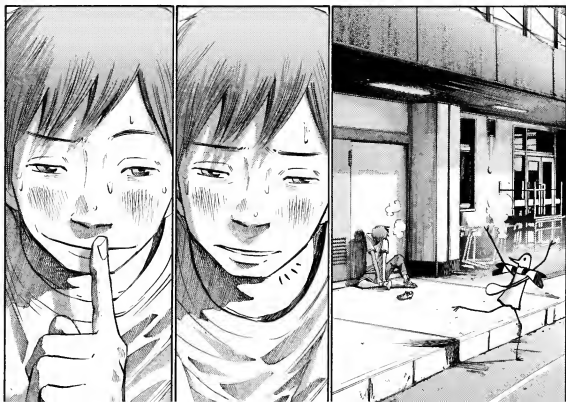


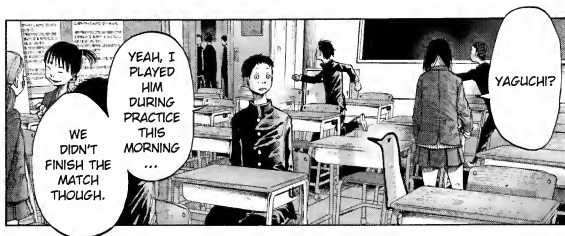


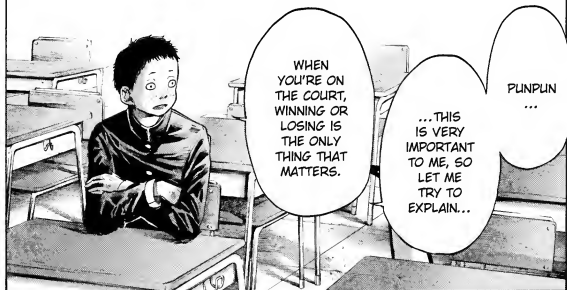


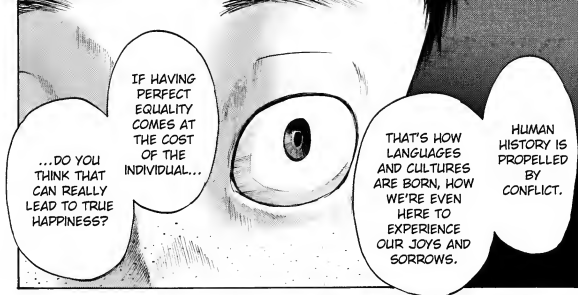












...DO YOU
THINK THAT
CAN REALLY
LEAD TO TRUE
HAPPINESS?

IF HAVING
PERFECT
EQUALITY
COMES AT
THE COST
OF THE
INDIVIDUAL...

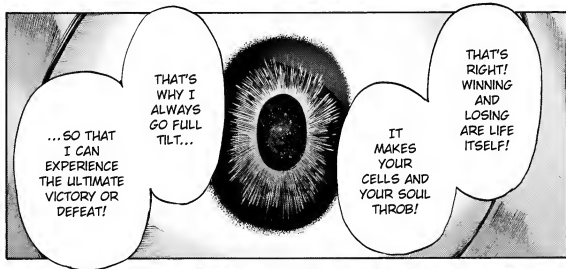
THAT'S HOW
LANGUAGES
AND CULTURES
ARE BORN, HOW
WE'RE EVEN
HERE TO
EXPERIENCE
OUR JOYS AND
SORROWS.

HUMAN
HISTORY IS
PROPELLED
BY
CONFLICT.



IF YOU
DON'T WANT
CONFLICT,
GO TO A
DESERTED
ISLAND.

ONLY
ROCKS ON A
RIVERBANK
CAN GET ALONG
EQUALLY—SAME
SIZE, SAME
PRESSURES.

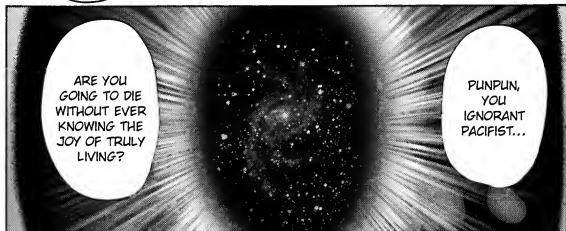


...SO THAT
I CAN
EXPERIENCE
THE ULTIMATE
VICTORY OR
DEFEAT!

THAT'S
WHY I
ALWAYS
GO FULL
TILT...

IT
MAKES
YOUR
CELLS AND
YOUR SOUL
THROB!

THAT'S
RIGHT!
WINNING
AND
LOSING
ARE LIFE
ITSELF!



ARE YOU
GOING TO DIE
WITHOUT EVER
KNOWING THE
JOY OF TRULY
LIVING?

PUNPUN,
YOU
IGNORANT
PACIFIST...



"THE
JOY OF
LIVING!"



LET'S
SEE IF WE
CAN HOLD
OUR BREATH
THE WHOLE
TIME WE'RE
PISSING.

IS THE
NEXT
CLASS IN
THE AV
ROOM?

Punpun
wasn't
sure what
Komatsu
was talking
about.

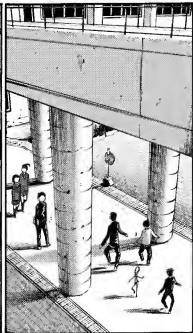
...why it was
wrong to want
everyone to
be happy.

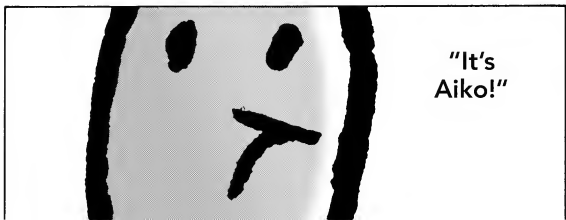
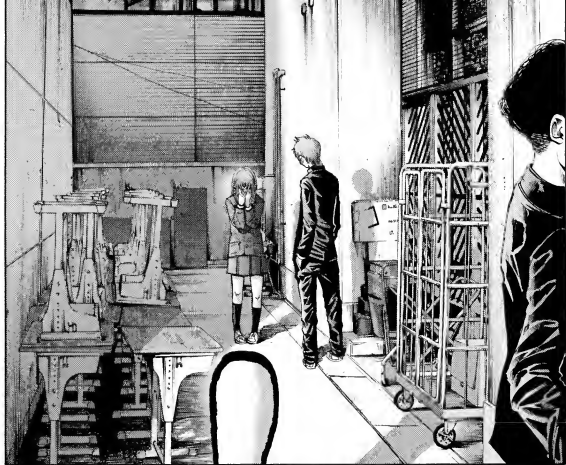
But he
wondered...

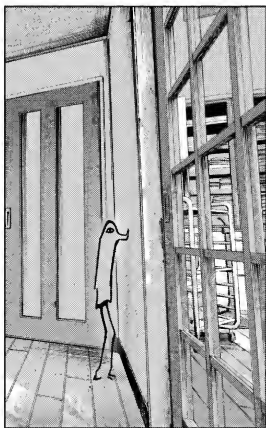


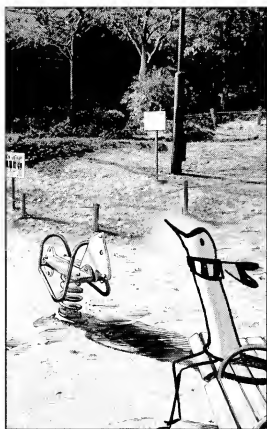
...Punpun would, in his current state, have no trouble believing it.

If it turned out that everyone else was an alien from another planet...



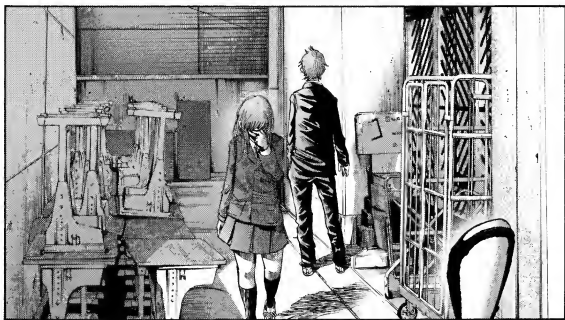




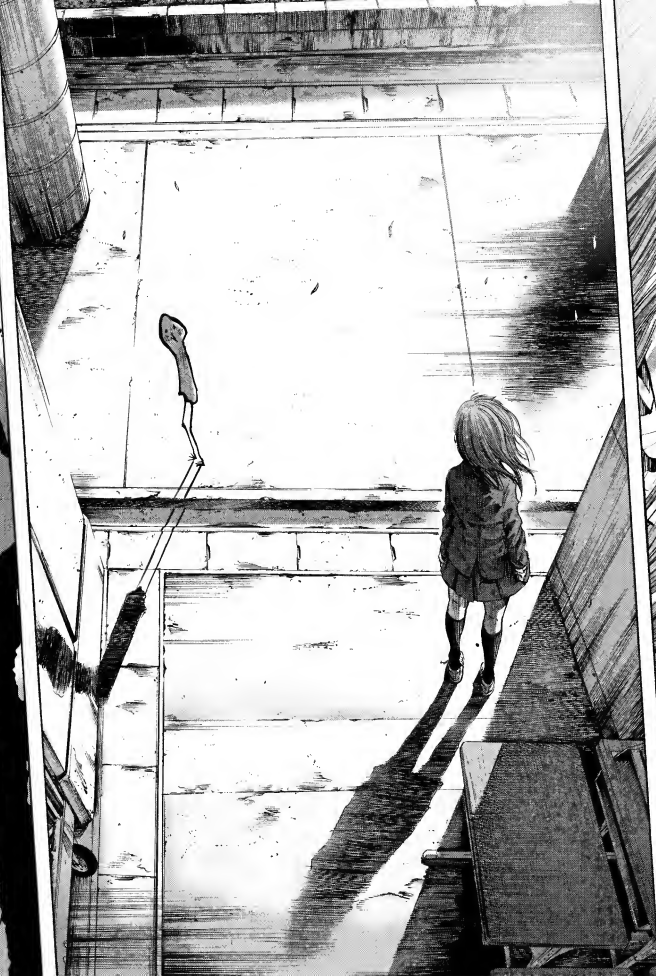


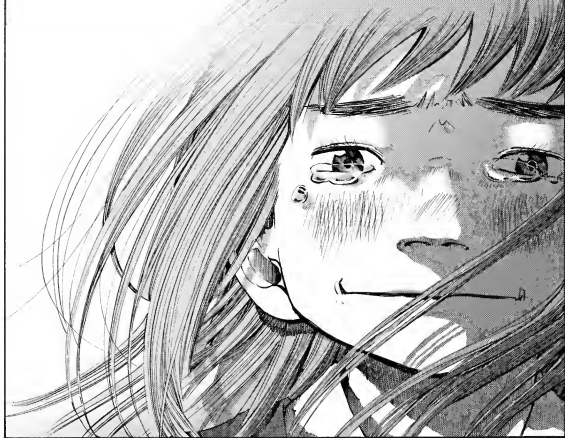


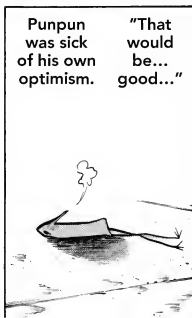
Aiko
is
Crying!



Aiko is
headed
this way!







Oh, that's it!
Aiko had feelings
for me all this time,
for Yaguchi coerced
her into going out
with him. Plus he
must've threatened
her if she talked to
other guys. Of course
that must be it!

Punpun
was
starting
to hate
himself.



"Yaguchi
isn't
like
that."

What a
lowlife—
Yaguchi is
just scum!
The jealous
monster!
Maybe I should
hit him on the
head from
behind?

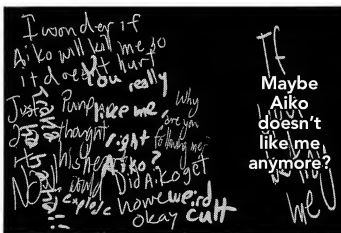
But if Aiko was crying,
then Yaguchi must
have done something to
make her sad. Punpun
really wanted to know what.



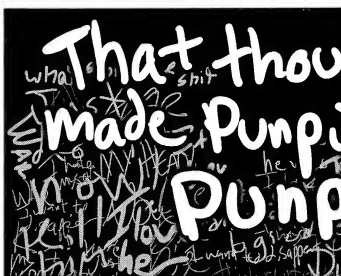
I believe
I wonder if, unbeknownst to me, Aiko has become a completely different Aiko who I don't know at all.
I love you too
That's what Aiko wanted
I'm so glad
My head



But... but what if...
I love you too
That's what Aiko wanted
I'm so glad
My head



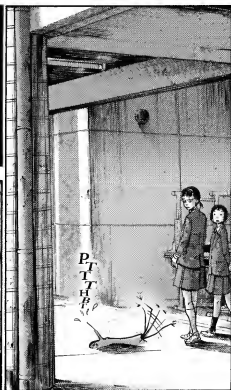
I wonder if Aiko will kill me so it doesn't hurt you really
Just Punpun we are we are you following me
Right Aiko? Did Aiko get to play now we're okay
If Maybe Aiko doesn't like me anymore?
We



That thought made Punpun... Punpun!
I love you
That's what Aiko wanted
I'm so glad
My head



Punpun
thought his
chest would
explode.





KO-
MATSU.

YAGUCHI.

YOU
GUYS
ARE THE
SINGLES
TEAM!

IWA-
MOTO.

HONDA.



UHM...THE
NORTHERN
PREFECTURE
TOURNAMENT
IS NEXT
WEEK...

THOSE OF
YOU WHO
WEREN'T
SELECTED,
CHEER YOUR
TEAMMATES
ON!

HEY, YOU
FIRST-YEAR
OVER THERE,
PAY
ATTENTION.



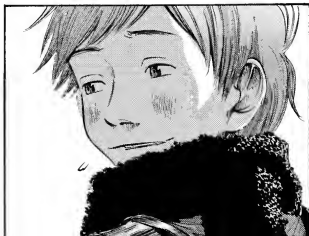
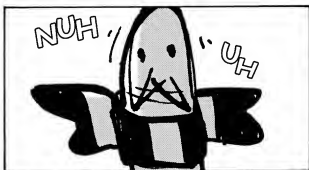
HEEEY!



...so he
decided to fill
his head with
choco pies and
space instead.

Punpun felt
like his brain
might explode
if he thought
any more...





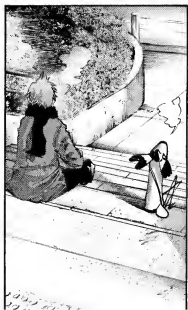
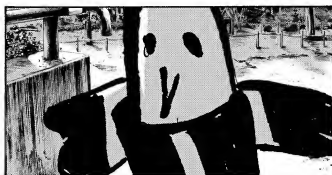


I
DON'T
KNOW...

WE HELD
HANDS ONCE,
BUT SHE
HASN'T LET
ME TOUCH
HER SINCE.

...THAT
GIRL I TOLD
YOU ABOUT
YESTERDAY?

YOU
KNOW
...



Punpun
had no way
of knowing
what Aiko
was thinking.



WHAT
DO YOU
THINK'S
UP WITH
THAT?

SHE'S THE
ONE WHO
ASKED ME
OUT.



YOU
KNOW, LIKE
"THERE'S A
NICE KID ON
MY TEAM"
KIND OF
THING.

...I
TOLD
HER
ABOUT
YOU AT
LUNCH
TODAY.

OH
YEAH...



...HER
FACE
JUST...

AND
THEN...



ACTUALLY,
SHE WAS
CRYING.

I
ASKED HER
WHAT WAS
WRONG, BUT
SHE WOULDN'T
ANSWER.



...AND
AIKO USED
TO HAVE
SOMETHING
GOING ON?

SO
DID
YOU...

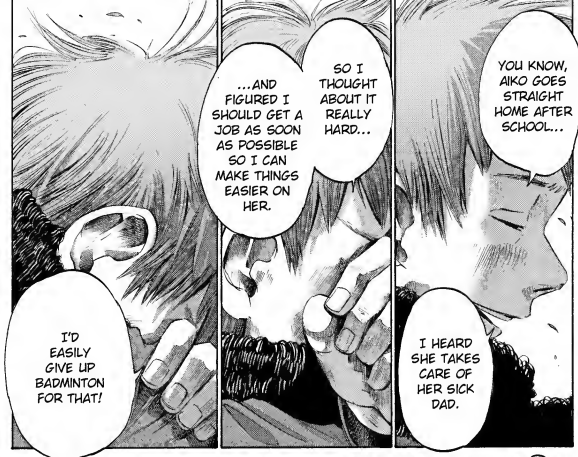


SAY
SOME-
THING
...

...OR
I'LL DO
SOMETHING
REALLY
EMBAR-
RASSING...

...SHE
REALLY
LOVES,
ONODERA?

MAYBE
YOU'RE
THE
ONE...



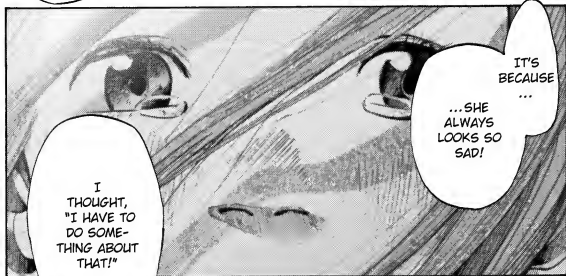
I'D
EASILY
GIVE UP
BADMINTON
FOR THAT!

...AND
FIGURED I
SHOULD GET A
JOB AS SOON
AS POSSIBLE
SO I CAN
MAKE THINGS
EASIER ON
HER.

SO I
THOUGHT
ABOUT IT
REALLY
HARD...

YOU KNOW,
AIKO GOES
STRAIGHT
HOME AFTER
SCHOOL...

I HEARD
SHE TAKES
CARE OF
HER SICK
DAD.



I
THOUGHT,
"I HAVE TO
DO SOME-
THING ABOUT
THAT!"

IT'S
BECAUSE
...

...SHE
ALWAYS
LOOKS SO
SAD!

"That
hasn't
changed."

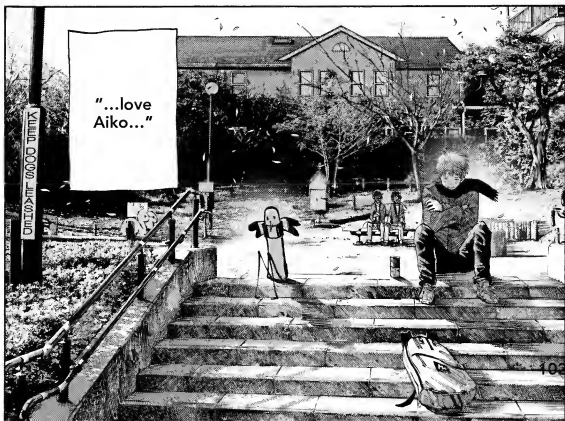
"Aiko does
always look
a little sad.

...Punpun
thought.

"That's
right..."



"I..."







"I love
Aiko..."



"I don't
know how
Aiko feels,
but I love
her," Punpun
said in
almost a
whisper.

...I'M NOT
ASKING YOU
HOW YOU
FEEL...

ONODERA...





AHHHHH!

AHH!
AHH!

AAARGH!



WHAT IS
THIS...?
WHAT'S
GOING
ON...?

I'M
FEELING
REALLY
FUZZY...



...AND
NOT GONE
OUT WITH
HER.

I
SHOULD'VE
JUST
STUCK TO
BADMINTON...

IT
FEELS LIKE
THERE'S
ONLY HALF
OF ME...

HOW
DO I
EXPLAIN
IT...?





I CAN'T
DO IT...
I CAN'T
CHOOSE
BETWEEN
THEM...

WHAT IS
THIS...?

SHIT...

IF I CAN'T
HAVE BOTH,
THEN I
DON'T WANT
EITHER.



BUT...



ONODERA!



AND *YOU*
HAVE TO
TELL HER
HOW YOU
FEEL.

IF I DON'T
WIN THE
TOURNAMENT
NEXT WEEK,
I'LL FORGET
ALL ABOUT
AIKO!



...THEN
AIKO IS
MINE FOR
LIFE!

...IF I
WIN...

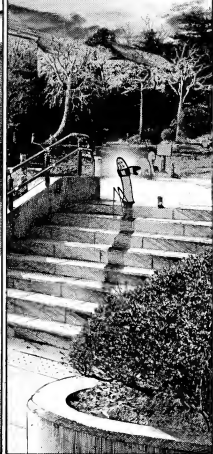


NO,
I AM.

"I'm
the one
who can
protect
Aiko."



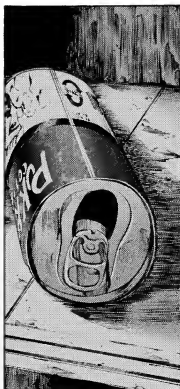
LATER.

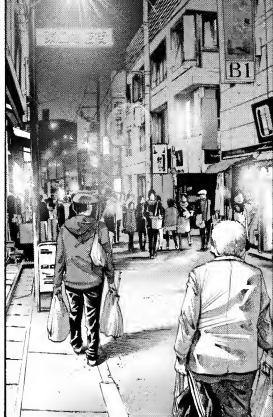


GOODNIGHT PUNPUN

Part Three

INIO ASANO





...AND THEN SHE GETS IN A SUPER-BAD MOOD. WHY ARE WOMEN SO SELFISH? HONESTLY, IT'S ASTOUNDING.

AND SHE HASN'T EVEN TAKEN THE TEST YET, BUT SHE'S ASKING ME, "WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF I HAD IT?" SO I SAY, "WELL, THIS ISN'T AN IDEAL TIME, IF WE'RE BEING REALISTIC..."

I MEAN, YEAH, I DON'T WEAR A RUBBER, BUT SHE'S THE ONE WHO SAYS SHE CAN'T COME IF I WRAP IT UP.

I DON'T KNOW, MY GIRLFRIEND SAID HER PERIOD'S LATE...



SO THAT'S
THE WHOLE
FANTASY
SCENARIO
I CAME UP
WITH IN BED
YESTERDAY.

HOW DO
I FIND A
GIRLFRIEND?

YOU'RE
PLENTY
DETER-
MINED.



...BUT IF YOU
DON'T WANT TO
EXPERIENCE
THE FURTHER
TERROR OF
WITHDRAWAL,
BEING ALONE IS
DEFINITELY NOT
A MISTAKE.

WELL, LOVE
IS LIKE A
DRUG TO
COUNTERACT
THE TERROR
OF SOLITUDE...



YUICHI,
DO YOU
THINK
BEING
ALIVE IS
FUN?



THIRTY-
THREE.



...HOW
OLD ARE
YOU
NOW?

YUICHI...



IT'S
NOT ABOUT
WHETHER OR
NOT IT'S FUN
ANYMORE...

WELL...
WHAT CAN
I SAY...?

THEN
WHAT IS
IT ABOUT,
YUICHI?

WOW...
...THAT'S
REALLY
COOL.

ATONEMENT,
MAYBE.



GO
FOR
IT.

WHOA
...

...I'M
GOING TO
USE THAT
THE NEXT
TIME I
GO ON A
DATE.



...YOU
SHOULD
BE OUT
LIVING IT
INSTEAD!

P
U
T
P
U
T
P
U
T



WHEN
YOU'RE
YOUNG...

...IF YOU
HAVE THE
TIME TO
PONDER THE
MEANING OF
LIFE...

R
R
R
M



AS
YOU GET
OLDER
YOU'LL
FIGURE
IT OUT
ANYWAY
...



THE
HELL
WITH
LOVE!

P
R
R
R
R
T



P
R
R
T

P
R
R
T





...AND THE
KILIMANJARO
BLEND.

LM...
CINNAMON
FRENCH
TOAST...



I'M
REALLY
SORRY!



LM...

...ABOUT
THE
OTHER
DAY,
LM...



MY
PAPERBACK
DIED
THOUGH.
HA HA HA!

DON'T
WORRY
ABOUT IT.
I DIDN'T
GET
BURNED
OR
ANYTHING
...



WELL,
ACTUALLY,
I WAS
THINKING
ABOUT IT
AFTERWARD,
AND...

I-I'M
SO SORRY.
I HAVE
ACCIDENTS
LIKE THAT
A LOT...

MY
SISTER
WAS
THERE
ABOUT
TWO
YEARS
AGO.

...DIDN'T
YOU USE
TO WORK
AT THE
MUNICIPAL
HOSPITAL?

I NEVER
THOUGHT
YOU'D COME
BACK...



AND, WELL,
IT'S A LITTLE
COMPLICATED,
BUT WE
GO BY
ONODERA
NOW.

THAT'S RIGHT.
THAT LITTLE
DRACAENA
YOU GAVE US
WHEN SHE WAS
DISCHARGED IS
STILL IN OUR
LIVING ROOM...

WAIT, ARE
YOU MR.
PUNYAMA?

OH!



JUST
AMAZING...
HA HA HA...

WHAT AN
AMAZING
COINCIDENCE!

WOOOW!



I CAN'T
FORGIVE
MYSELF FOR
CONSIDERING
BEING CONTENT
WITH SUCH A
COINCIDENCE...

IF YOU
CALL AN
UNEXPECTED
MIRACLE A
COINCIDENCE...



IT'S
NOT
PRETTY.



...IS
NOTHING
BUT A
SHAME.

A LOVE
WHERE
YOU JUST
LICK EACH
OTHER'S
WOUNDS...

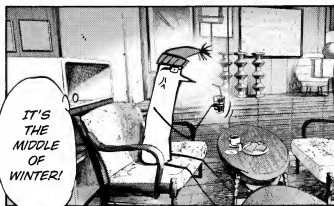


HERE
YOU
ARE!



I
DIDN'T
ORDER
AN ICED
COFFEE.

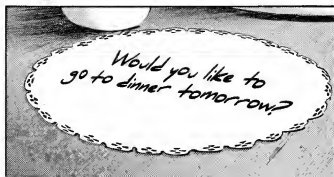
HEY,
YOU
REALLY
ARE
CLUMSY
...



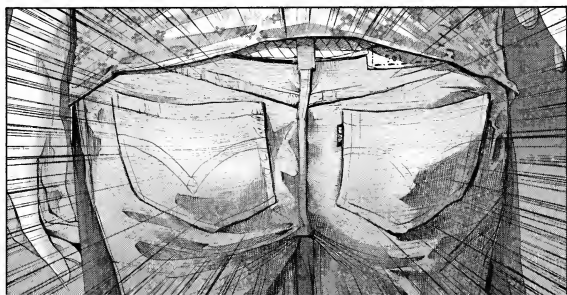
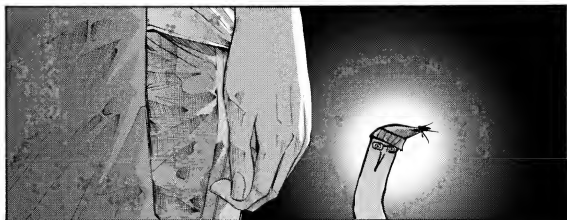
IT'S
THE
MIDDLE
OF
WINTER!

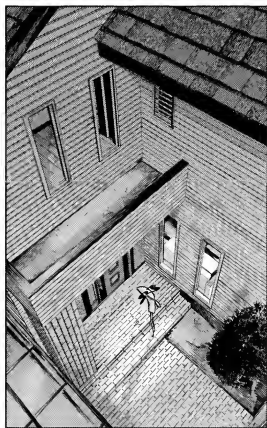


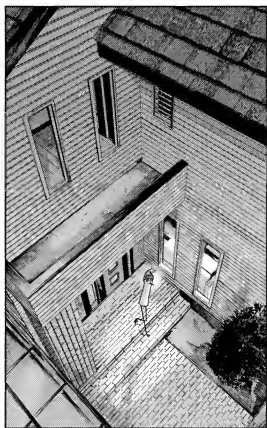
IT'S
ON THE
HOUSE!

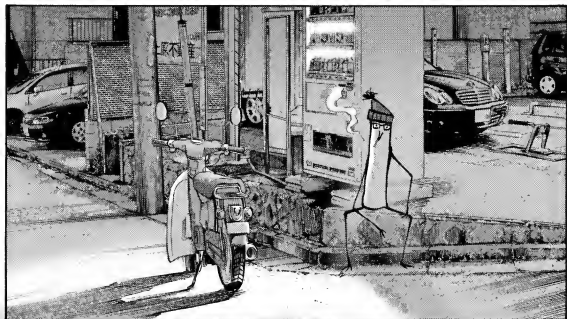


Would you like to
go to dinner tomorrow?







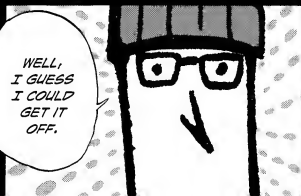


...
OKAY
...

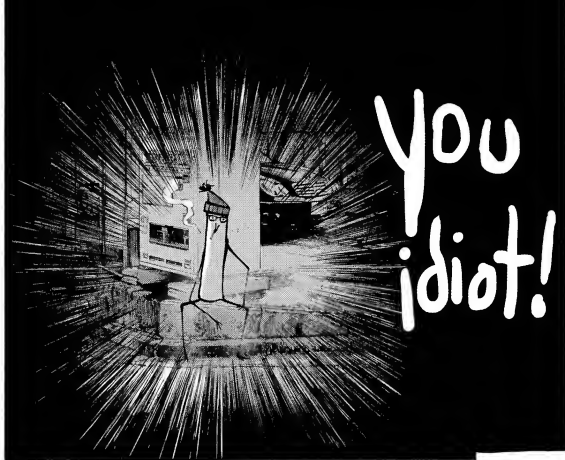
OH...



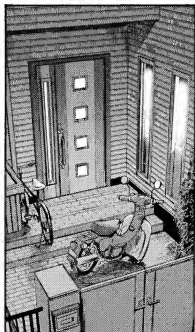
THANKS SO MUCH FOR ASKING ME OUT, BUT I WORK TOMORROW NIGHT.



WELL,
I GUESS
I COULD
GET IT
OFF.



IT WAS
JUST A
YOUNG
WOMAN'S
WHIM.

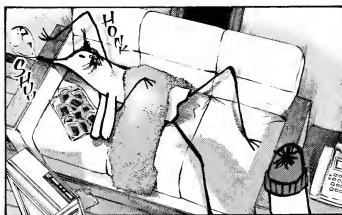


IT'S
JUST
WHAT?

IT'S
JUST
THAT...



WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING,
FALLING
FOR THAT
AT YOUR
AGE?





WHAT
ARE YOU
TALKING
ABOUT?
I'M
ALWAYS
NICE.



H-HUH?
WHAT'S
UP? WHY
ARE YOU
BEING
SO NICE?



C'MON,
IF YOU
DON'T GO
TO BED,
YOU'LL
CATCH A
COLD.



HMM...
YOU
ARE?...
Y-YEAH,
YES, YOU
ARE...



I GOT YOU
SOME CHOCO
PIES. I LEFT
THEM IN YOUR
ROOM...

PUNPUNUUUN!!

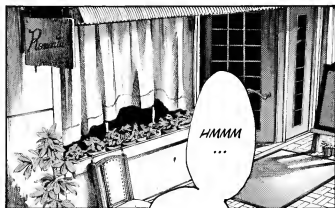




...ISN'T
MADE
FOR
FALLING
IN LOVE.

A
GUY
LIKE
ME...









PHEW...

TONIGHT
HAS BEEN
CHAOTIC
FROM THE
GET-GO.



YES,
CUNNI-



I'M
SORRY
I GOT IT
WET.

OH,
BEFORE
I
FORGET,
HERE...

YES,
THAT'S
ALL!



THANK
YOU FOR
WAITING!



OH...

...I
GET IT.



NO,
THAT
ISN'T
WHY...

WELL, OF
COURSE
THAT'S
PART OF
IT, BUT...



I WAS
WONDERING
WHY YOU'D
ASK AN OLD
MAN OUT
FOR DINNER,
BUT IT WAS
TO RETURN
THIS...

YOU'RE
VERY
CONSCI-
ENTIOUS.

MIDORI OKUMA,
25 YEARS OLD.
A LOCAL BORN
AND BRED, SHE
CURRENTLY
LIVES WITH HER
PARENTS.



SHE WAS
THE ONE
WHO GAVE
US THE
TREE OF
HAPPINESS.

I
REMEMBER
HER WELL,
SINCE SHE
WAS MY
SISTER'S
NURSE.

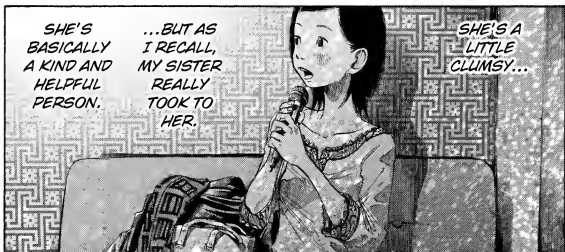
SHE
WORKED AT
THE MUNICIPAL
HOSPITAL
AFTER
GRADUATING
FROM NURSING
SCHOOL.



SHE'S
BASICALLY
A KIND AND
HELPFUL
PERSON.

...BUT AS
I RECALL,
MY SISTER
REALLY
TOOK TO
HER.

SHE'S A
LITTLE
CLUMSY...





...BUT
SHE'S A
LITTLE
WORRIED
ABOUT HER
UNCERTAIN
FUTURE.

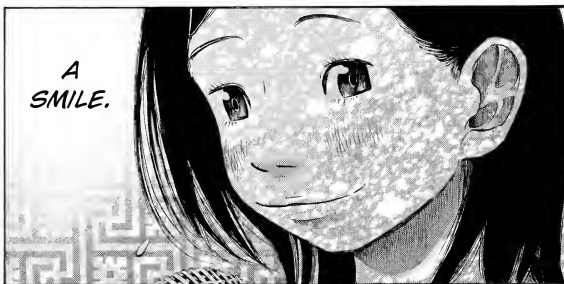
HER HIGH
SCHOOL DREAM
WAS TO OWN A
COFFEE SHOP,
AND SO SHE
STARTED
WORKING PART-
TIME AT THE
CAFÉ...

SHE QUIT
LAST YEAR
BECAUSE,
AMONG
OTHER
THINGS, THE
WORKING
CONDITIONS
WERE ROUGH.

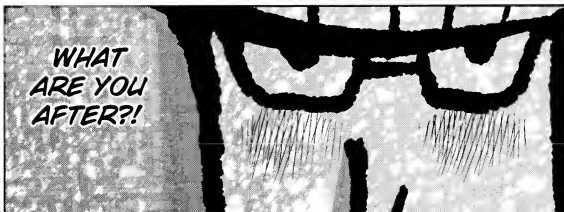


SHE'S
SWEET.
SHE'S A
GOOD
PERSON.

FOR
SOMEONE
IN HER
TWENTIES,
SHE'S VERY...



A
SMILE.



WHAT
ARE YOU
AFTER?!



OH,
SORRY
ABOUT
THAT.

LIHH
...

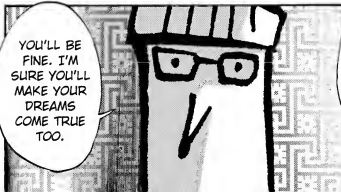
I'M THE
ONLY ONE
SINGING.
DON'T
YOU LIKE
KARAOKE,
YUICHI?



THAT'S
AMAZING...
I NEED TO
BECOME
A REAL
ADULT...

WELL,
AFTER
LIVING WITH
THEM FOR
TWO YEARS,
I'VE GROWN
TO LOVE
THEM LIKE
FAMILY.

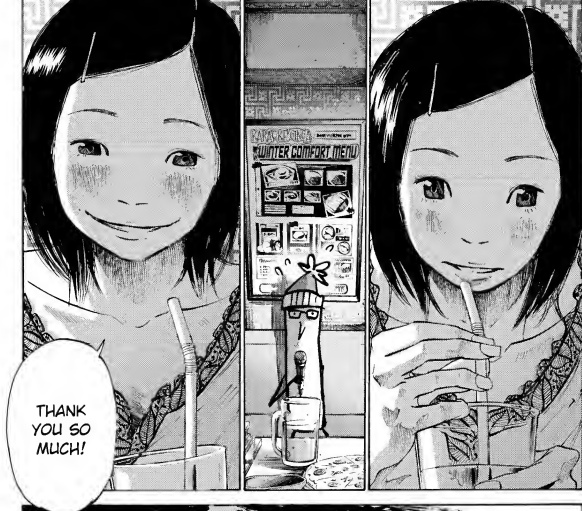
YOU'RE
REALLY
SWEET,
YUICHI.

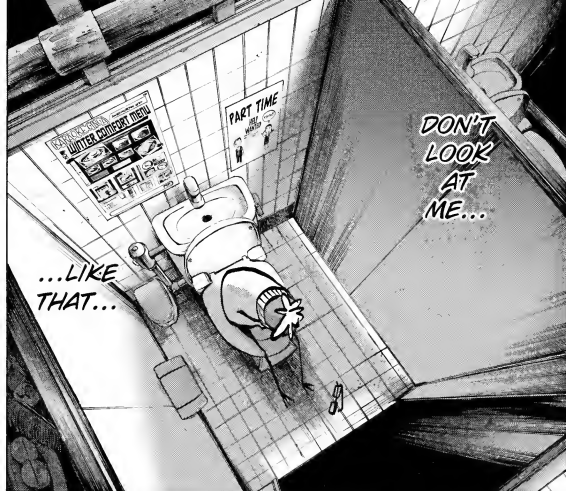


YOU'LL BE
FINE. I'M
SURE YOU'LL
MAKE YOUR
DREAMS
COME TRUE
TOO.



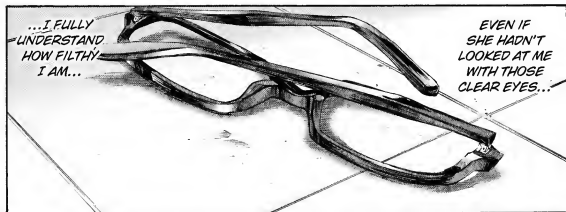
LOOKING
AFTER YOUR
SISTER AND
NEPHEW
LIKE THAT.





...LIKE
THAT...

DON'T
LOOK
AT
ME...



...I FULLY
UNDERSTAND
HOW FILTHY
I AM...

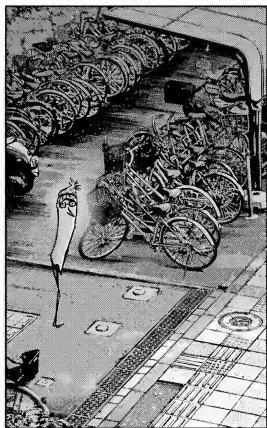
EVEN IF
SHE HADN'T
LOOKED AT ME
WITH THOSE
CLEAR EYES...

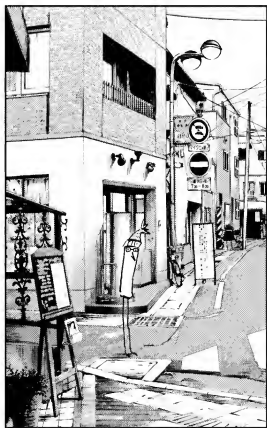
DON'T
FORGET
THAT
ANGLISH!

WHAT'S THE
MEANING OF
SUPERFICIAL
KINDNESS?

I'M
SICKENED
BY MY OWN
PUERILITY.

I
NEED
TO GO.







YUICHI...

HEY,
YUICHI,
WAIT
UP!

DA
SH



WHY
ARE YOU
LEAVING
SO
SUDDENLY
?!

DID I SAY
SOMETHING
TO OFFEND
YOU?!





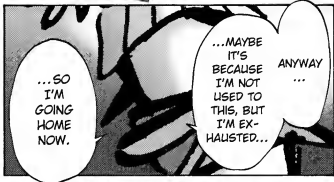
THE
POOP!

IT
WON'T
STOP,
SO I'M
GOING
HOME!!



WHAT
...?

WHAT
ARE YOU
TALKING
ABOUT?!



...SO
I'M
GOING
HOME
NOW.

...MAYBE
IT'S
BECAUSE
I'M NOT
USED TO
THIS, BUT
I'M EX-
HAUSTED...

ANYWAY
...

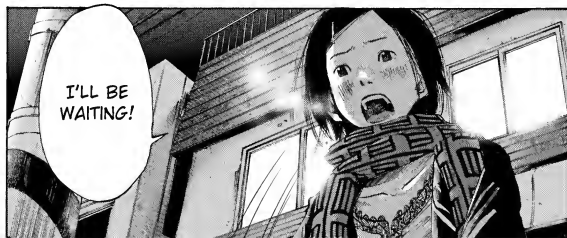


...I
UNDER-
STAND...

OH...



WM...





HAVE A
GREAT
WEEKEND,
EVERYONE!



NOW THE
WEEKEND
FORECAST
FOR THE
KANTO
REGION.



IT
LOOKS LIKE
IT'S GOING
TO SNOW
TOMORROW!
WILL YOU
GO DO THE
SHOPPING?

HEEEY!
YUICHI!

AN
EXTREME
COLD FRONT
IS COMING
IN FROM
THE SEA OF
JAPAN, AND
SNOW IS
PREDICTED IN
THE INLAND
AREAS.

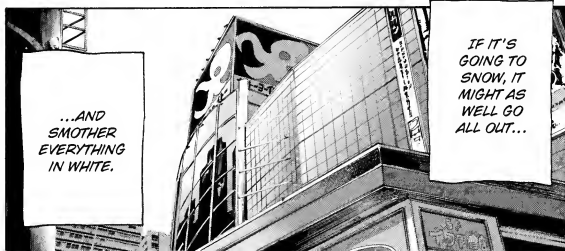


...ABLE
TO DO
ANYTHING
THE LAST
COUPLE
OF
DAYS...

SO I
BASIC-
ALLY
HAVEN'T
BEEN...



SNOW...



...AND
SMOTHER
EVERYTHING
IN WHITE.

IF IT'S
GOING TO
SNOW, IT
MIGHT AS
WELL GO
ALL OUT...



SORRY!
WE'RE
CLOSED...



AGAIN?
YOU'RE A
STRANGE
ONE.

IT'S NOT
GOOD FOR
YOU TO
WORK TOO
HARD.



I'LL
COME
BACK
ANOTHER
TIME.

OH...
SORRY
ABOUT
THAT...



PLEASE—
PLEASE
MAKE
YOUR-
SELF AT
HOME...

OH...
NOT AT
ALL! IT'S
TOTALLY
FINE!

MY
MANAGER
HAD AN
EMERGENCY
AND HAD
TO LEAVE,
SO I'M
CLOSING
UP.



OH...

...YUICHI...



I JUST
MEANT TO
APOLOGIZE
FOR THE
OTHER DAY
AND LEAVE
RIGHT
AWAY...

I
DIDN'T
HESITATE
TO SIT
DOWN.



HOW LONG
HAS IT BEEN
SINCE I'VE
SPENT SUCH
PEACEFUL
TIME WITH A
WOMAN?

...BUT
BEFORE I
REALIZED
IT, DUSK
HAD
FALLEN.



LISTENING
TO HER TALK
PASSIONATELY
ABOUT HER
DREAMS...

"I WANT
TO OPEN A
COZY LITTLE
CAFÉ."



I...



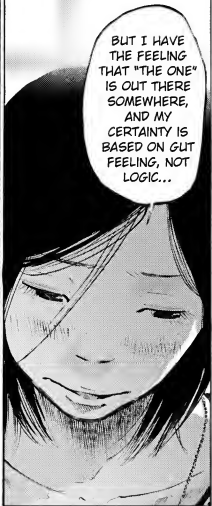




ACTUALLY,
I'M VERY
SHY.

ESPE-
CIALLY
AROUND
MEN...

THAT WAS
THE FIRST
TIME I'VE
EVER ASKED
SOMEONE I
BARELY KNOW
TO DINNER!



BUT I HAVE
THE FEELING
THAT "THE ONE"
IS OUT THERE
SOMEWHERE,
AND MY
CERTAINTY IS
BASED ON GUT
FEELING, NOT
LOGIC...



I
NEED
TO
PEE!



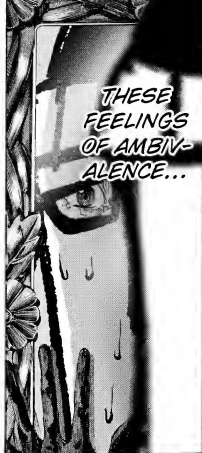
WAIT
JUST A
MINUTE!

UM,
I...

SHUP
THUD



FOOT-PROOF
OPENING
YOUR STUSH
CAFE
35

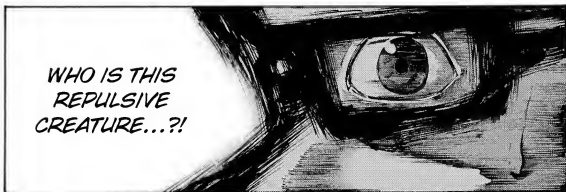


THESE
FEELINGS
OF AMBIV-
ALENCE...



I
KNOW...

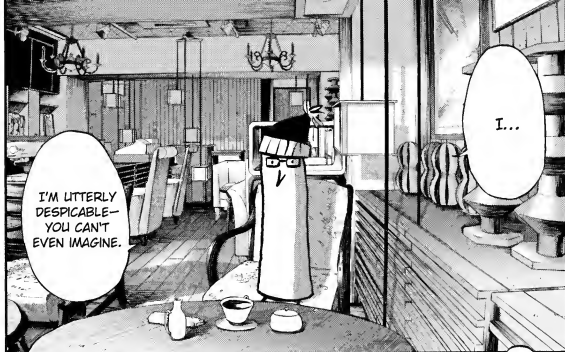
...WHAT
HAPPENS
AFTER
THIS.



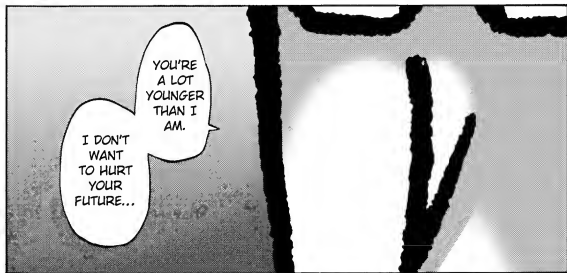
WHO IS THIS
REPULSIVE
CREATURE...?!

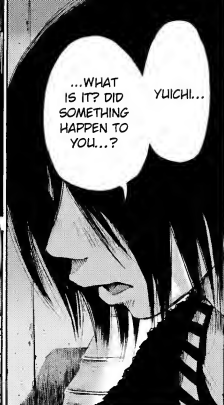


WELL,
YOU
KNOW...









...WHAT
IS IT? DID
SOMETHING
HAPPEN TO
YOU...?

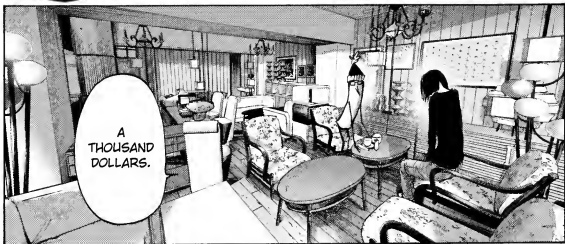
YUICHI...



SORRY
...

...UMM,
HOW
MUCH
IS THE
COFFEE?

I
SHOULD
BE
GOING...

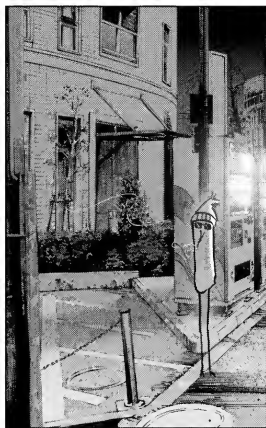


A
THOUSAND
DOLLARS.

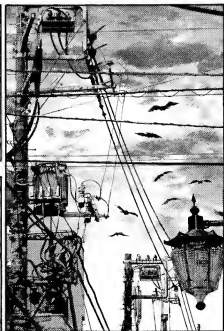


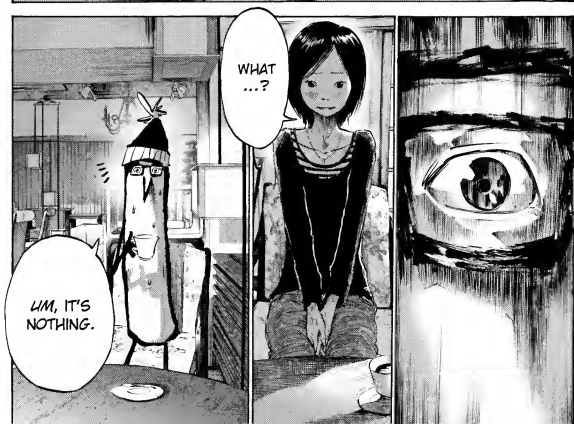
IF YOU
DON'T TELL
ME WHAT
HAPPENED
TO YOU...

...I'LL
CHARGE THE
FULL PRICE,
NO DISCOUNT,
NOT EVEN A
CENT...











THERE'S
NO
HURRY...



OH MAN,
IT'S BEEN
FIVE
YEARS
ALREADY...

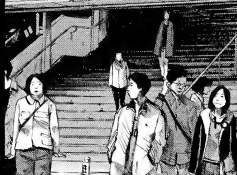
IT WAS
FIVE
YEARS
AGO...

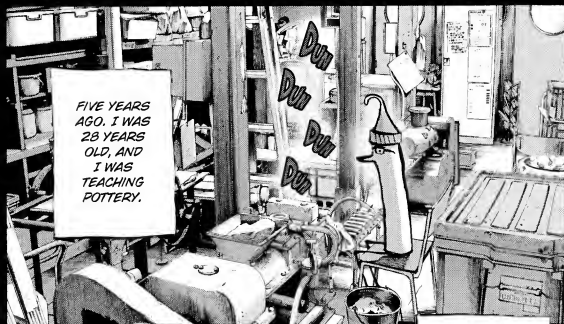


...SO ONE
OF MY
PROFESSORS
FOUND ME A
JOB.

...BUT I STILL
COULDN'T FIGURE
OUT MY PLACE IN
LIFE, AND I WAS
FEELING PRETTY
ISOLATED...

I HAD A
MASTER'S
DEGREE IN
ART...





WELL, I WAS
TEACHING A
COMMUNITY
CLASS AIMED
AT THE LOCAL
HOUSEWIVES.



I'LL SEE
YOU NEXT
WEEK.

THANK
YOU FOR
TODAY!



I WAS
VERY
POPULAR
BACK
THEN.

GOOD
JOB,
LADIES.
I'LL SEE
YOU NEXT
WEEK.



WE'RE NOT
ALLOWED
TO ACCEPT
GIFTS FROM
STUDENTS.

ESPECIALLY WITH
MRS. YAGI, WHOSE
INTEREST IN ME
WAS STRANGELY
INTENSE.

OH...
THANK
YOU,
BUT
NO...

UM...MR.
ONODERA.

WOULD
YOU LIKE
SOME
CREAM
PUFFS?
I WAITED
IN LINE
FOREVER
TO GET
THEM!

I PAY
TUITION
JUST LIKE
EVERYONE
ELSE—
DON'T YOU
THINK IT'S
UNFAIR?!

A SCHOOL
THAT RUNS ON
CITY FUNDS LIKE
YOURS, ONE
LITTLE COMPLAINT
TO CITY HALL
AND I COULD
GET YOU
CLOSED
DOWN...



WHO
DOES HE
THINK HE
IS?!

MR.
ONODERA
IS SO
RUDE!

HE'S SO
NICE TO
MRS. KOJIMA,
MRS. OIKE AND
MRS. SUGAWARA,
BUT HE'S SO
COLD TO ME!

I'M
SORRY.

YES,
YES, HA
HA, YES,
THANK
YOU. WE'LL
SEE YOU
NEXT
WEEK...

YES,
MRS. YAGI,
I AM SO
SORRY.
I'LL HAVE
A TALK
WITH HIM.

SHE
MIGHT BE
A STUDENT,
BUT SHE'S
ALSO ONLY A
CUSTOMER,
SO JUST
PLAY ALONG.

YUICHI,
I KNOW
YOU'RE
VERY CON-
SCIENTIOUS,
BUT NO
NEED TO
TAKE THIS
SERIOUSLY.

NAAAH,
WE GET
PEOPLE
LIKE THIS
EVERY
ONCE IN
A WHILE.



YOU'RE
SO
POPULAR.

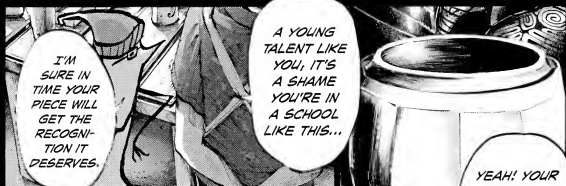
HOW
NICE.



I'M TEN
TIMES MORE
ENVOIOUS OF
YOU.

STOP
THAT,
WASHIO!

HEEEY!



I'M
SURE IN
TIME YOUR
PIECE WILL
GET THE
RECOGNITION IT
DESERVES.

A YOUNG
TALENT LIKE
YOU, IT'S
A SHAME
YOU'RE IN
A SCHOOL
LIKE THIS...

YEAH! YOUR
PIECE, THAT
CELADON
POT, I
HEAR IT'S
GOING TO
BE IN A
MAGAZINE.



THAT
THING...



SO I THINK
ETERNAL
BEAUTY LIES
IN SOME-
THING EVER
CHANGING...

BESIDES,
MAN
DECIDES THE
CRITERIA
FOR BEAUTY
AFTER THE
FACT.

THAT'S
JUST A
THING.



LIKE
LIFE, FOR
INSTANCE.



I
THINK IT'S
PLENTY
IMPRES-
SIVE.

...WHEN
IT WAS
FIRING
IN THE
KILN?

DON'T
YOU THINK
THAT POT
WAS AT
ITS MOST
BEAUTI-
FUL...

...THE
DELICATE
CURVES...

THE FULL,
ABUNDANT
SHAPE...





I WANTED
TO CREATE
SOMETHING
LIKE THAT
SOMEDAY
TOO!



YUJI!!

YUJI, ARE
YOU IN
THERE?!



YOU'RE
WORK-
ING ON
ANOTHER
MODEL?



KA
KCHAK

I'M
MISSING
A PIECE.

YOU
COULD'VE
UNLOCKED
THE DOOR
FOR ME.



OH,
YOU'RE
HOME.



I WAS
DATING A
WOMAN I
KNEW FROM
UNIVERSITY.
SHE LIVED
WITH HER
PARENTS AND
WORKED IN
AN OFFICE.



SHE LOVED
TO DRINK
AND INSULT
PEOPLE.



WILL
YOU KEEP
SATURDAY
NIGHT FREE?
I MADE
PLANS.

I'M
GOING
NOW...



THAT SAID,
SHE WAS
FOR THE
MOST PART
A GENTLE,
KIND
WOMAN.



OH,
YOU
FORGOT
THIS...

GOOD-
NIGHT.



THAT
WAS
MY LIFE
BACK
THEN.



USUAL
DAYS
PASSING
IN THE
USUAL
WAY...

...
INEVITABLY
LEADING TO
THE USUAL
FUTURE.



FEELING
LIKE A
JIGSAW
PUZZLE
WITH A
MISSING
PIECE...

...BUT STILL
BUYING INTO
THE CONCEPT
THAT BEING
HUMAN
MEANT
BECOMING
AN ADULT.



PEOPLE,
PEOPLE,
PEOPLE!
SURROUNDED
BY ALL KINDS
OF OTHER
PEOPLE...



BUT...

...BUT
WHAT
IF...

Dreams
For Sale Cheap...
\$1.00
-Toshiki

BUT I'D
KEEP MY
COOL
COMPOSURE.

...OR
SO I
THOUGHT.

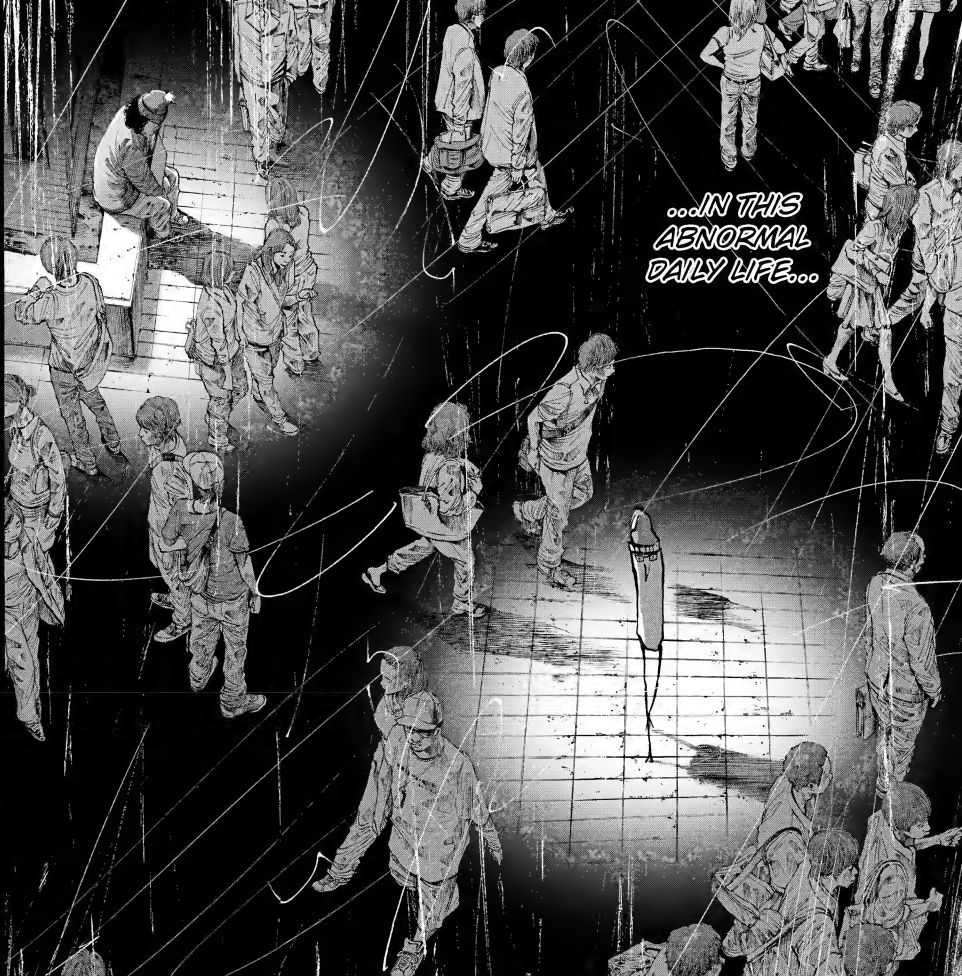


NO
!!

WHAT
IF
I'M...

...
ALREADY
BROKEN?

I
AM
ME!



...IN THIS
ABNORMAL
DAILY LIFE...







OH...
NO,
DON'T
DO
THAT!

WHERE
ARE MY
MANNERS?!
I'LL GET
SOME TEA-
YOU JUST
RELAX.



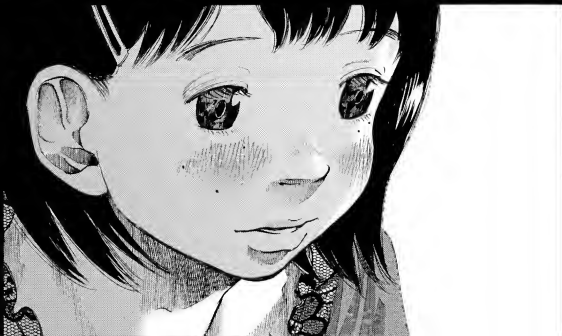
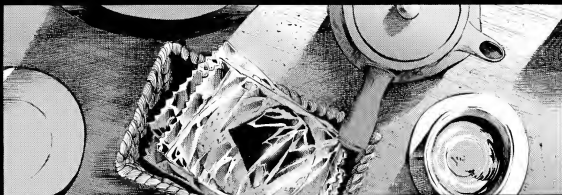
I'LL
LEAVE
AS SOON
AS SHE'S
SATISFIED.

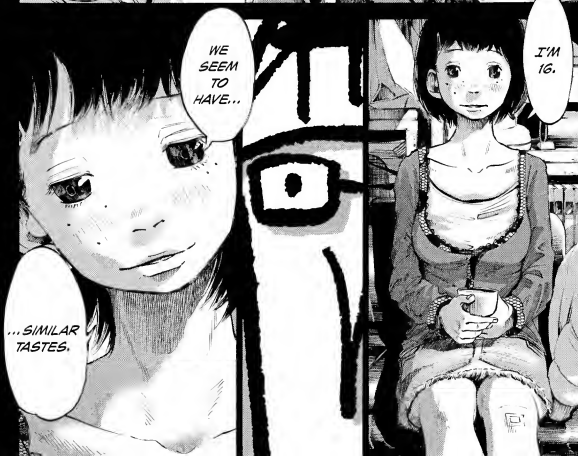
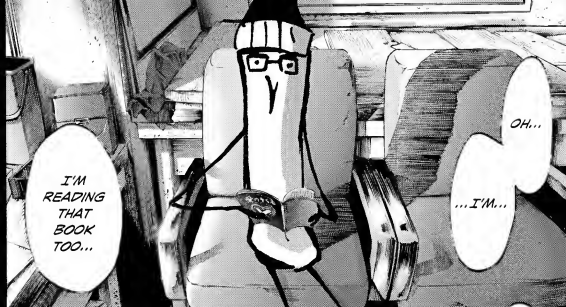
UM...
PLEASE
DON'T
WORRY
ABOUT
IT...



OH...

OHH!
I SEE,
HA HA
HA!

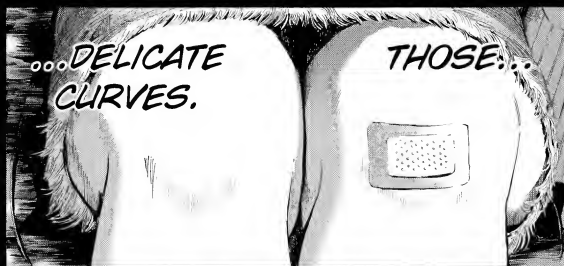






...FULL,
ABUNDANT
SHAPE...

THAT...



...DELICATE
CURVES.

THOSE...





THINKING BACK,
THAT GIRL WAS THE
EXTRAORDINARY
THAT SUDDENLY
APPEARED IN MY
ORDINARY LIFE.



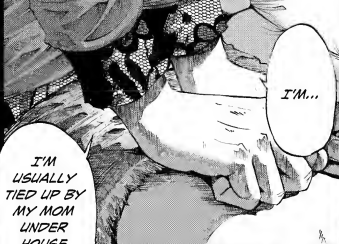
OR MAYBE I WAS
PROJECTING THE
INEFFABLE SOMETHING
I'D BEEN LOOKING FOR
ON TO THIS GIRL, WHO
WAS MORE THAN TEN
YEARS YOUNGER
THAN ME.



...WELLING
IN HER
DOWNCAST
EYES.

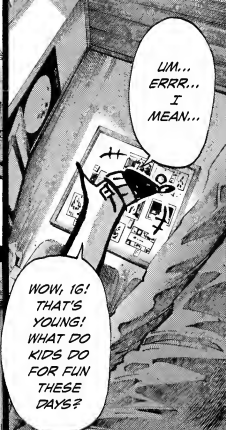
I EASILY
IMAGINED THE
WORDS
"BULLYING" AND
"OSTRACISM"...

UWWW..
IS IT A
HOLIDAY?



I'M
USUALLY
TIED UP BY
MY MOM
UNDER
HOUSE
ARREST...

I'M...



LIM...
ERRR...
I
MEAN...

WOW, 16!
THAT'S
YOUNG!
WHAT DO
KIDS DO
FOR FUN
THESE
DAYS?

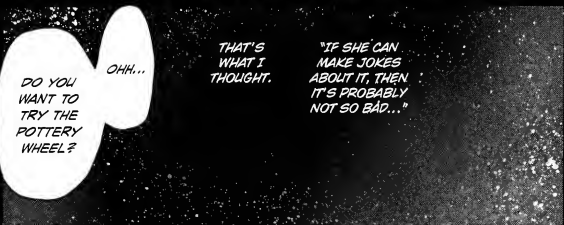


HA
HA...

SORRY.

HA
HA
HA!

WHAT
A WAY
WITH
WORDS!



DO YOU
WANT TO
TRY THE
POTTERY
WHEEL?

OHH...

THAT'S
WHAT I
THOUGHT.

"IF SHE CAN
MAKE JOKE
ABOUT IT, THEN
IT'S PROBABLY
NOT SO BAD..."



ABOVE ALL...

...CARRIED ON
THAT MOIST
JUNE AIR...

...HER SCENT...

...HER WARMTH.



...AND
PRODUCED
IN ME A
CHEMICAL
REACTION.

THAT PALE
SKIN LOOKED
LIKE IT WOULD
CRUMBLE AT
A TOUCH...



I
CONFESS!

STROKE

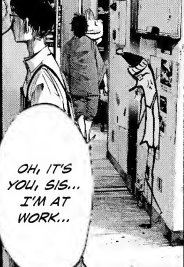


AND
I...



I WAS
VIOLENTLY...

...ERECT!



OH, IT'S
YOU, SIS...
I'M AT
WORK...



YUICHI,
TELEPHONE!



OKAY!
I'LL
HEAD
OVER
RIGHT
NOW!



PUNPUN
DIDN'T
COME
HOME
FROM
SCHOOL
?!

HUH?



...BUT
I WANTED
TO SHOW
YOU HOW TO
APPLY GLAZE
AND SOME
OTHER
STUFF...

SOME-
THING'S
COME
UP..

...I'M
REALLY
SORRY.

WEEELL
...



JUST
COME BY
WHENEVER
YOU WANT!

YOU
DON'T
NEED TO
WAIT TILL
YOUR MOM
COMES
AGAIN...

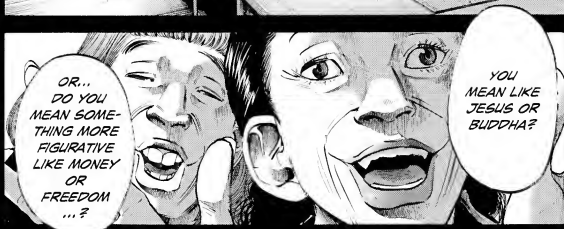




I'VE
NEVER
REALLY
THOUGHT
ABOUT
IT...

GOD...?

NOT
REALLY
...

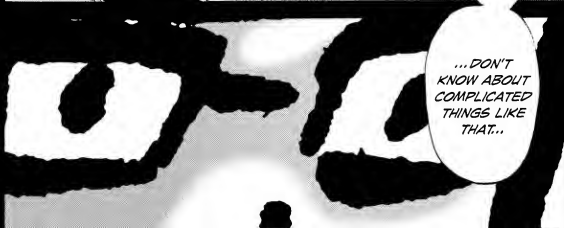


OR...
DO YOU
MEAN SOME-
THING MORE
FIGURATIVE
LIKE MONEY
OR
FREEDOM
...?

YOU
MEAN LIKE
JESUS OR
BUDDHA?



I...



...DON'T
KNOW ABOUT
COMPLICATED
THINGS LIKE
THAT...



...
TINKLE
...

...
HOY.

DEAR
GOD,
DEAR
GOD...



IT'S A
SPELL I'VE
USED SINCE
I WAS
LITTLE...

IT'S FOR
WHEN I'M
LONELY
OR IN
PAIN.



TINKLE
...?

HUH?
WHAT?
WHAT
WAS
THAT?



I'M
DISGUSTED
THAT I'VE
RELIED ON
A GOD THAT
ISN'T EVEN
REAL.

NO
MATTER
HOW HARD
I PRAY,
NOTHING
GOOD
EVER
HAPPENS.

BUT
I'VE
NEVER
SEEN
GOD.



...MAYBE
HE
REALLY
DOES
EXIST.

BUT NOW
I THINK,
FOR THE
FIRST
TIME...



IF I
GO TO
SCHOOL
...

...WILL
YOU GO
ON A
DATE
WITH
ME?



W-WELL,
JUST
COME
BACK!

OH, AND
GO TO
SCHOOL
TOO!

THAT'S
WHEN I
THOUGHT...

"IF THERE IS
A GOD, WHY
ON EARTH DID
HE SEND THIS
GIRL INTO MY
ORDINARY
EXISTENCE?"

YEAH!

I
PROMISE!

YOU
KNOW YOU
SHOULDN'T
COME THIS
FAR BY
YOURSELF!

YOUR
MOM AND
DAD ARE
DESPERATELY
LOOKING FOR
YOU RIGHT
NOW!

OH,
THANK
GOD!

I
LOOKED
EVERY-
WHERE!

I
DIDN'T
GET IT.

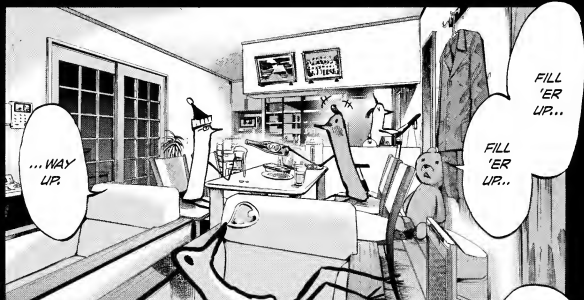
NO, I
WAS JUST
PRETENDING
NOT TO
UNDERSTAND.



DON'T
HOLD
BACK-
JUST
KEEP
DRINKING!

I'M SO
SORRY TO
TROUBLE
YOU, BUT
YOU REALLY
HELPED
US OUT
TODAY!

HEEY,
YUICHI!



...WAY
UP.

FILL
'ER
UP...

FILL
'ER
UP...



UHH...

I'M
NOT
SURE...



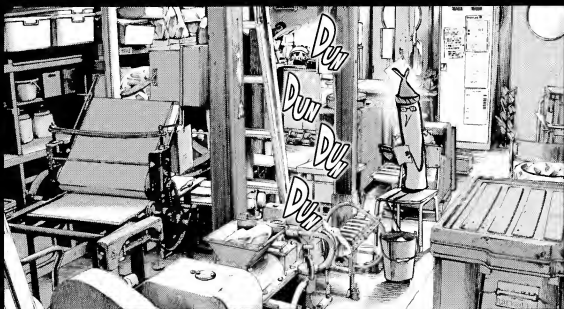
BY
THE WAY,
YUICHI, HOW
ARE THINGS
WITH THAT
UG-I MEAN
CHARMING
GIRLFRIEND
OF YOURS?

ISN'T IT
TIME YOU
THOUGHT
ABOUT
MAR-
RIAGE?

...IT
MIGHT'VE
ALL BEEN
DECIDED
ALREADY.

BY
THEN...

NO...





DO YOU
REMEM-
BER YOUR
PROMISE?



HELLO.





ME?

I WAS
COMPLETELY
AVERAGE.

WHAT
KIND
OF
STUDENT
WERE
YOU...

...MR.
ONODERA?



BUT I WAS
CONVINCED
THAT I WAS
SPECIAL, AND I
WAS SEARCHING
FOR THE THING
THAT SET ME
APART FROM
EVERYONE
ELSE...



...I SPEND
MY DAYS
LIVING IN
FEAR OF
SOMETHING
SPILLING
OUT OF MY
HEART...

SO
NOW...

...LIKE
WATER
FROM A
BOWL,
ESCAPING
THE LIMITS
OF
SURFACE
TENSION.

"I WAS
SO YOUNG
BACK THEN."
BUT THAT'S
JUST A
JUSTIFICA-
TION.

WHEN I
LOOK
BACK ON
IT NOW,
I TELL
MYSELF...



...BUT
NOT
SATISFAC-
TION.

I HAVE
ACCEP-
TANCE...

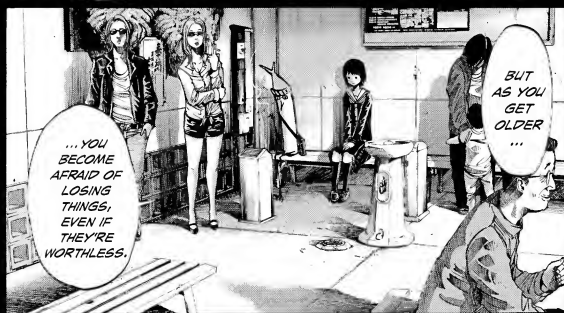


MR.
ONO-
DERA...



REALLY..
I JUST
WANT
TO
BE ABLE
TO
FOCUS ON MY
POTTERY..
THAT'S ALL.

ARE
YOU
HAPPY
NOW?



...YOU
BECOME
AFRAID OF
LOSING
THINGS,
EVEN IF
THEY'RE
WORTHLESS.

BUT
AS YOU
GET
OLDER
...



SORRY

...I'M JUST
BABBLING.
MAYBE IT'S
TIME TO GO
HOME.



I...

ALL
I WANT
IS TO BE
WITH THE
PERSON I
TREASURE.



WHAT
ABOUT
YOU...

WHAT
DO YOU
THINK
HAPPY-
NESS
IS?



LET'S
BOTH
FOCUS
ON OUR
GOALS,
STARTING
TOMOR-
ROW.

DON'T
LET THE
BULLYING
GET YOU
DOWN.



AH...

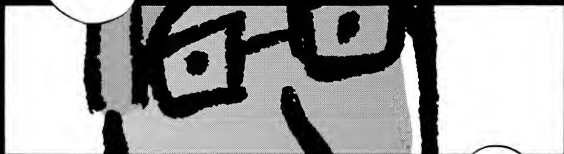


YOU'LL
BE
FINE!

I'M SURE
YOU'LL FIND
HAPPINESS
ONE DAY!



I'M NOT
BEING
BULLIED.



A BOY
IN MY
CLASS
GOT ME
PREGNANT...

...AND I
HAD AN
ABORTION
SIX
MONTHS
AGO.



BUT
MY
MOM...

THERE'S
SOME-
THING
WRONG
WITH
HER...



... THAT
MY FRIENDS
TURNED
THEIR BACKS
ON ME AND
ALL MY
CLASSMATES
TALK ABOUT
ME BEHIND
MY BACK.

I
DON'T
CARE
...

SCHOOL
ONLY
LASTS
THREE
YEARS.



BUT WHEN
I'M AT
HOME, I
REALLY
AM TIED TO
A POST.

SHE SAYS
IT'S TO
PREVENT
IT FROM
HAPPENING
AGAIN...



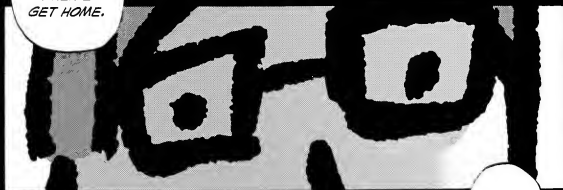
I'M
PROBABLY
GOING TO
SPEND
THE REST
OF MY
LIFE...

... GROWING
OLD, STUCK
ALONE IN
A SMALL
ROOM.



I DON'T
KNOW WHAT
SHE'LL
DO TO ME
WHEN I
GET HOME.

I PUSHED
MY MOM
AND
PRACTICALLY
RAN AWAY TO
GET HERE
TODAY...



I
MIGHT...



...END
UP
DEAD.



HELP
ME!



GOODNIGHT PUNPUN INIO ASANO
Part Three

BACKGROUND ASSISTANTS: Yuki Toribuchi
Satsuki Sato
CG ASSISTANT: Hisashi Saito
COOPERATION: Kumatsuto
Yasumasa Iwama
Yu Uehara



START

START
FROM THE
BEGINNING

BONUS
STAGE!

FINISH

TREASURE
CHEST

GOODNIGHT PUNPUN

Part Four





CAST OF CHARACTERS



PUNPUN ONODERA

A young, choco pie-loving guy. His favorite killer move is Shinku Hadoken from *Super Street Fighter II Turbo*.



MAMA ONODERA

Punpun's mother. She believes she was an angel in a past life. A bit of an alcoholic.



YUICHI ONODERA

Mama's younger brother. He's at an age where he can't be honest with himself. Currently working part-time at a video store.



AIKO TANAKA

The girl Punpun has loved since elementary school.



MIDORI OKUMA

She works part-time at a café but used to be a nurse.



YAGUCHI

A senior member of the badminton team. Rumor among the younger team members is that he has a huge dick.



KOMATSU

Punpun's classmate. The red comet of the badminton team.



MASUMI SEKI

Punpun's classmate. Has a very short fuse.



SHIMIZU

Punpun's classmate. Gets yelled at a lot.



NUMATA

The sexiest girl in class. Her favorite food is sesame seeds.



MRS. YAGI

A student at the pottery school where Yuichi worked five years ago.



A HIGH SCHOOLER WITH A SASSY HAIRCUT

Mrs. Yagi's daughter. She asks Yuichi for help, saying her mother is keeping her prisoner at home.



WASHIO

Yuichi's coworker at the pottery school. A rising star in the pottery world.



YUICHI'S EX-GIRLFRIEND

Aside from drinking a lot and gossiping about people, a gentle and kind woman.



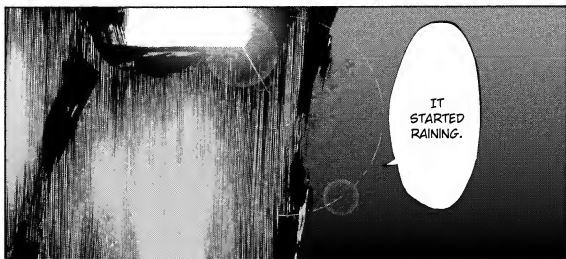
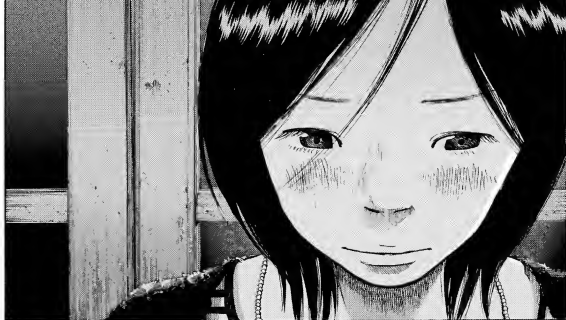
CONTENTS

Chapter 35	209
Chapter 36	226
Chapter 37	245
Chapter 38	261
Chapter 39	279
Chapter 40	297
Chapter 41	315
Chapter 42	341
Chapter 43	359
Chapter 44	379
Chapter 45	398
Chapter 46	419

STORY THUS FAR...

Punpun, an incredibly ordinary middle school student, is embroiled in a foolhardy contest with a senior member of the badminton team over Aiko Tanaka, his unrequited (?) love.





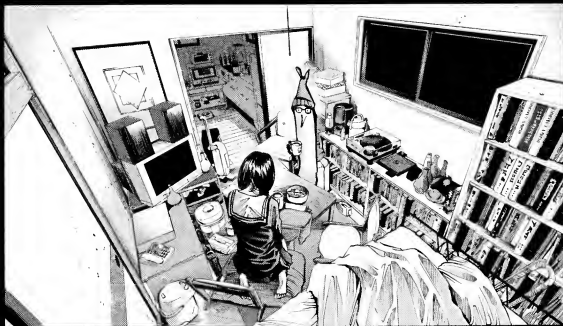
...AND I
DIDN'T HAVE
A CHANCE
TO THINK.

IN A FLASH,
THE RAIN HAD
INTENSIFIED...















RR

R

M

TA

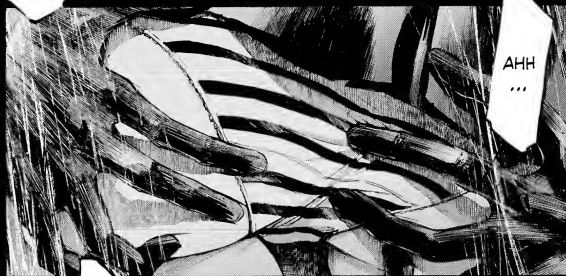


M
M

BL



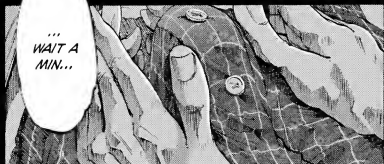
UD







OH...
WHA?



...
WAIT A
MIN...

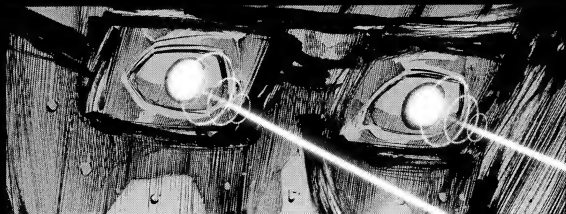
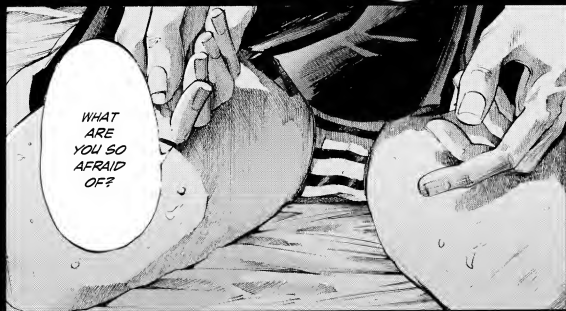


STOP
IT!

S-
STOP!









YOU'RE NOT
SATISFIED
WITH YOUR
LIFE NOW,
RIGHT?



... THE
ONLY ONE
FOR ME,
YUICHI.

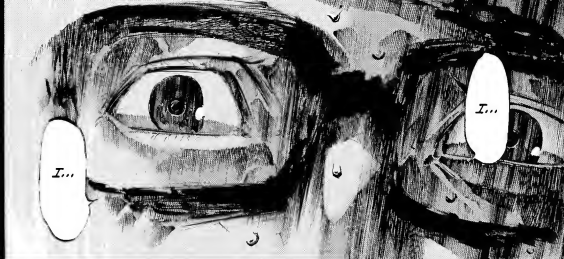
YOU'RE
...

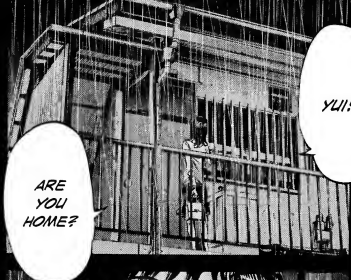


WHY
DON'T
YOU...

... FIND
IT WITH
ME?

YOU SAID,
"I'M SURE
YOU'LL FIND
HAPPINESS."





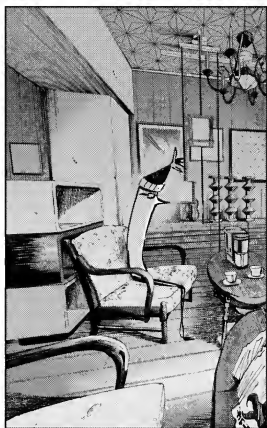
ARE
YOU
HOME?

YUI!



I'M
COMING
IN.











OH, THIS
SUCKS.
EVEN MY
UNDER-
WEAR'S
SOAKED.

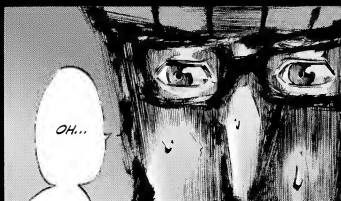
WASN'T
THAT
LIGHTNING
AMAZING
?!



UM...

WHAT'S
UP? THIS
IS A
SURPRISE.

HOW
LONG IS THIS
BLACKOUT
GOING TO
LAST? THE
ELECTRIC
COMPANY
SHOULD BE
BETTER AT
DEALING WITH
THINGS LIKE
THIS.



OH...



WHAT
DO YOU
MEAN,
A SUR-
PRISE?



...YEAH,
OF
COURSE
YOU DO.

I
ALWAYS
COME
OVER.

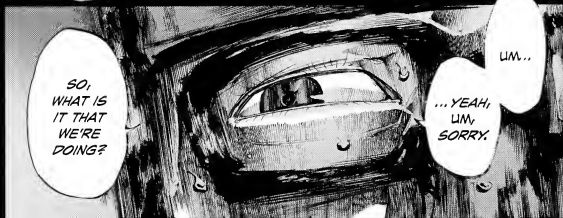


ERRR...

YOU IDIOT,
WEREN'T
YOU
LISTENING?

BESIDES,
I TOLD
YOU WE
WERE
GOING TO
DO SOME-
THING
TONIGHT.

REMEM-
BER, I
ASKED YOU
TO KEEP
SATURDAY
OPEN?



SO,
WHAT IS
IT THAT
WE'RE
DOING?

UM...

...YEAH,
UM,
SORRY.



BUT
THE
TRAINS

...AREN'T
RUNNING
BECAUSE
OF THE
STORM, SO
THEY'RE
STUCK...

WELL...

...MY
PARENTS
WERE
GOING TO
YOKOHAMA
FOR THE
DAY..

...SO I
THOUGHT
THEY COULD
STOP HERE
AND WE
COULD ALL
HAVE DINNER
IN CHINA-
TOWN.

WE'LL
DO IT
ANOTHER
TIME.



OHH...
HA HA.
GOT IT!

YUI,
YOU DO
UNDER-
STAND WHAT
THIS WAS
ABOUT,
RIGHT?

"GOT IT"?
YOU'RE
BEING
AWFULLY
CASUAL
ABOUT
THIS.

WELL
...

...WHY
DON'T YOU
GO HAVE
A BATH?
YOU DON'T
WANT TO
CATCH A
COLD.



...UM,
GO OUT
TO DINNER
AND TALK
ABOUT IT?

WHY
DON'T
WE...

UH...
UHM...



DO YOU
REALLY...

...HATE
TALKING
ABOUT
MARRIAGE
SO MUCH?

YOU'RE
ACTING
WEIRD,
YUI.



I...

I
THINK
I'VE...

...HUNG
IN FOR AS
LONG AS
I CAN.



YUKKO AND
KANNA AND
AKI... ALL
MY COLLEGE
FRIENDS
ARE GETTING
MARRIED.

HAVE YOU
THOUGHT
ABOUT HOW
I FEEL,
GETTING
LEFT
BEHIND?

WE'VE
BEEN
GOING
OUT FOR
FIVE
YEARS
NOW...

...AND
I'M
GOING
TO BE
THIRTY
SOON.

...I FELT
WHATEVER IT
WAS I'D BEEN
DESPERATELY
TRYING TO
SUSTAIN
CRUMBLE.

IN
THAT
INSTANT...

... YOU SAID,
"WHEN THINGS
SETTLE DOWN
AT WORK,
LET'S GET
MARRIED."

DO YOU
REMEM-
BER... ?
RIGHT
AFTER YOU
STARTED
WORKING,
WE WENT TO
THAT AMUSE-
MENT PARK IN
NASU, AND
ON THE
FERRIS
WHEEL...

I WAS CAUGHT
UP IN THOUGHTS
OF THE 16-YEAR-
OLD GIRL ON THE
OTHER SIDE OF
THE CLOSET DOOR
AND THE AROUSAL
HER INTENSE GAZE
WAS CAUSING.

THE TRIVIAL
WORDS SPILLING
OUT OF THE MOUTH
OF THE WOMAN IN
FRONT OF ME JUST
BOUNCED OFF
MY EARS.



AND
I'VE
JUST...

...
HUNG IN
THERE.

I...

...
BELIEVED
YOU THEN,
YUI...

...BY
PERSISTENT
FANTASIES OF
HER PALE, YOUNG
BREASTS AND
SPARSE, AS YET
LINGERED
PUBIC HAIRS.

...AFTER A
SIDELONG
GLANCE AT
THE ROTTEN
TOMATO OF MY
GIRLFRIEND'S
FACE...

LITTLE BY LITTLE, MY
CONSCIOUSNESS
WAS OVERWHELMED
BY THE IMAGE OF
THE UNDERWEAR I'D
GLIMPSED BETWEEN
HER THIGHS, AND...



SO I
WON'T
FORCE
YOU...

I
WON'T,
BUT...

B-
BUT...!

I UNDER-
STAND
HOW YOU
FEEL...

...I
SHOULD'VE
STUFFED
MY COCK IN
THE GIRL
THE FIRST
CHANCE I
GOT!

UGH, IF
THIS WAS
HOW IT WAS
GOING TO
PLAY OUT...

A black and white manga-style close-up of a woman with long dark hair, crying with tears streaming down her face. She has a small earring in her left ear.

ALL I
ASK IS
THAT
YOU...

...SAY
YOU
LOVE
ME!

UHN UHN UH N OH
YEAH UHN UHN FUCK
ME UHN UHN YEAH
DO IT UHN UHN HARDER

A black and white manga-style close-up of a person's eyes through goggles. The eyes are wide open and looking upwards. The goggles have a strap across the bridge of the nose.

OH H...!

...HEAVEN!



I
LOVE
YOU.

...IT WOULD
HAVE BEEN
BETTER IF
I'D NEVER
BEEN BORN.

...I
THOUGHT...

IN THE
MIDST
OF THIS
VOMITOUS
SITUATION...

OH...

SIGH
...

SOMETHING
INSIDE ME...

...BURST.

OH...

...YOU'RE
HARD.

YOU'RE
SO
SILLY...

...YUI.





OH
...!

YUI
...

YUI!
YUI!

IF I'M
GOING TO
FALL...



...I
MIGHT
AS WELL
GO ALL
THE WAY.



OH
MY
GOD!

OH
...

OH
MY...



TOO
MUCH!



NO!



WHY
...?!



WHAT
?!



OH
...



WHOA...



AH
HH
HH!

I
GET
IT...

THIS
IS A
DREAM!

I'M
...

THERE
WAS
NEVER
A
GIRL...

OH
...

...
WHOA,
YUI!

I'M
...

WHEN
I WAKE
UP, IT'LL
ALL
RETURN
TO
NORMAL
...

...
COM-
ING...

RIGHT
...?

I'M
COM-
ING!

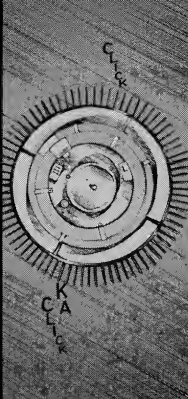
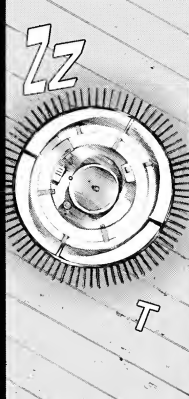
GOD?

...
TINKLE
...

...DEAR
GOD,
DEAR
GOD...

OH...







THERE
IS NO
GOD.

JUST
LIKE I
THOUGHT...









I
NEEDED
TIME TO
THINK.

I TOOK TWO
WEEKS OFF WITH
THE LIE THAT
I WAS GOING
ABROAD.

...AND IN
TEN DAYS,
HER VERY
EXISTENCE
FELT LIKE AN
ILLUSION.

BUT IN A
COUPLE OF
DAYS, I STARTED
THINKING THAT
THE ABORTION
AND BEING KEPT
PRISONER WERE
ALL IN HER
IMAGINATION...



EITHER
WAY, I
CHOSE THE
INCONSE-
QUENTIAL
LIFE.

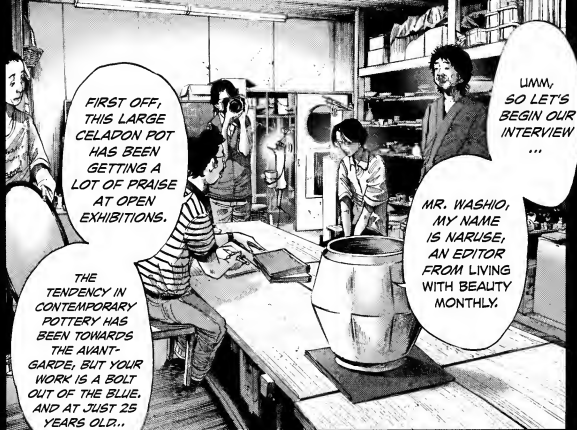


umm...

IN A
WAY, IT
WAS A
RELIEF.

...DO
YOU WANT
TO GET
MARRIED?





FIRST OFF,
THIS LARGE
CELADON POT
HAS BEEN
GETTING A
LOT OF PRAISE
AT OPEN
EXHIBITIONS.

THE
TENDENCY IN
CONTEMPORARY
POTTERY HAS
BEEN TOWARDS
THE AVANT-
GARDE, BUT YOUR
WORK IS A BOLT
OUT OF THE BLUE.
AND AT JUST 25
YEARS OLD...

UMMM,
SO LET'S
BEGIN OUR
INTERVIEW
...

MR. WASHIO,
MY NAME
IS NARUSE,
AN EDITOR
FROM LIVING
WITH BEAUTY
MONTHLY.

...DIDN'T
LAST.

BUT THAT
FEELING...



Dear
Naruse...



UMMMM
...

...
HUH?

MR.
WASHIO?







OH, I'M
SORRY.

UH
...

YOUR
DAUGHTER,
DID SHE
SAY
ANYTHING
TO YOU?



MR.
ONODERA!
HOW
COULD YOU
GO AWAY
FOR TWO
WEEKS
WITHOUT
TELLING
ME?

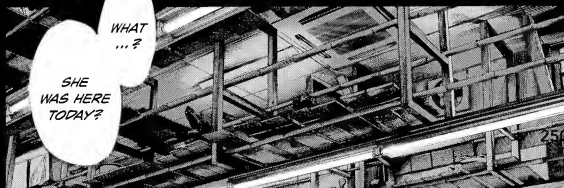
I WAS
WORRIED
YOU WERE
GOING TO
QUIT.



I
WONDER
WHERE
SHE'S
GONE?

SHE
WAS HERE
EARLIER
TODAY.

OH, WELL,
SHE'S BEEN
COMING
HERE WHILE
YOU WERE
GONE...



WHAT
...?

SHE
WAS HERE
TODAY?



WOULD
YOU LIKE
TO GO
OUT FOR
DINNER,
JUST THE
TWO OF
US?

THERE'S
A LOVELY
FUSION
RESTAURANT
THAT JUST
OPENED IN
JIYUGAOKA.

NEVER
MIND
THAT, MR.
ONODERA.

...WAY MAYBE
OFF BASE I'M...
HERE,
BUT...

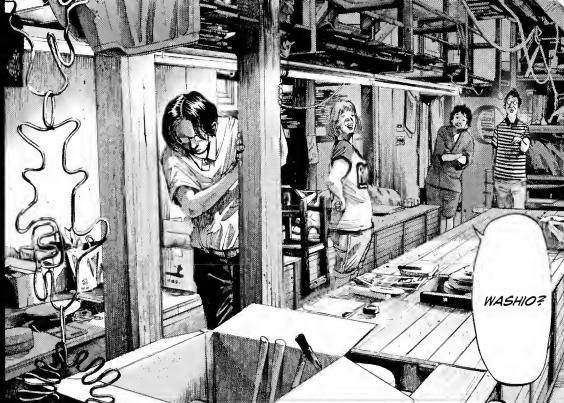
MRS.
YAGI...
I'M
SORRY
...

...KEEP
YOUR
DAUGHTER
LOCKED
UP IN
YOUR
HOUSE?

...DO
YOU...

SHE TRAINED
FOR OVER TEN
YEARS AT FRENCH
RESTAURANTS ALL
OVER THE WORLD,
SO IT'S GUARANTEED
TO BE DELICIOUS.

MY FRIEND
FROM HIGH
SCHOOL
OPENED IT.
IT'S
ALWAYS
BEEN HER
DREAM.



WASHIO?

ARE YOU
TYING
UP YOUR
DAUGHTER
AND
KEEPING
HER
PRISONER?

JUST
ANSWER
THE
QUES-
TION...

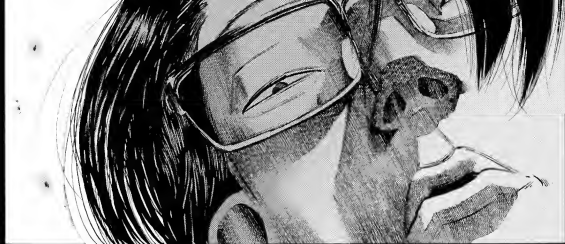
I'M
SURE
YOU'LL
LOVE IT
TOO.

THE
SMELL OF
THE STEW
AND THE
TENDERNESS
OF THE MEAT
IS JUST...!

AHHH,
WELL...!

...THE
QUESTION.

ANSWER
...





OH
NOO!

A
H
H
H
H
H
!

NNMARGH!!

W-
WASHIO!

OW
!!

WHAT
ARE
YOU
DOING?

OW,
OUCH!

MRS.
YAGI...

HANG IN
THERE,
MRS.
YAGI!

YES,
HELLO
...
WE
NEED
AN
AMBU-
LANCE!

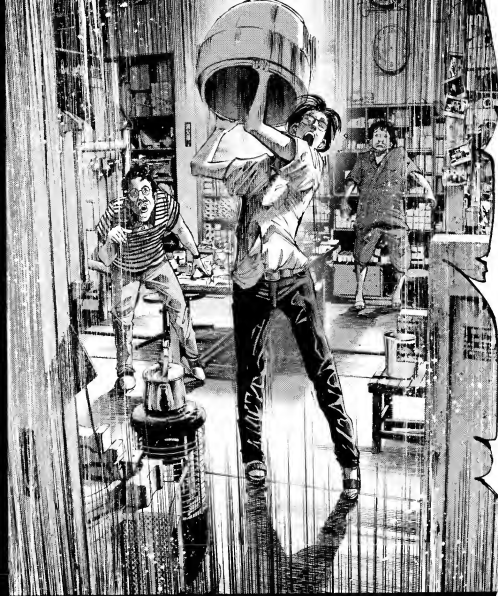
...A
POLICE-
MAN!

GO
FIND
...

YUICHI!







THE
HELL
WITH
THIS
!!



DID YOU...

...MAKE
HIM DO
IT?



IT
WAS LOVE
AT FIRST
SIGHT,
APPARENTLY.

I
FELT...

...A
SHIVER
RUN
DOWN MY
SPINE
AT HER
SMILE...

...SO
BEAUTIFUL
IT WAS
ALMOST
SCARY.



WELL,
WASHIO
SAID...

HEE
HEE
...

HOW IS
THAT EVEN A
THING, WHEN
YOU DON'T
KNOW ANY-
THING ABOUT
THE OTHER
PERSON?

...HE
WOULD DO
ANYTHING
FOR ME.



I
JUST GAVE
HIM A LITTLE
HEAD, AND
SUDDENLY HE
WANTED TO
DO IT.

HE
HESITATED
AT FIRST...

...BUT
MEN
ARE SO
EASY.

HOW
FUNNY!

BUT...

...IT'S
HUMAN
NATURE TO
MINDLESSLY
PURSUE
BEAUTY...

...AND
TO BE
TOYED
WITH...



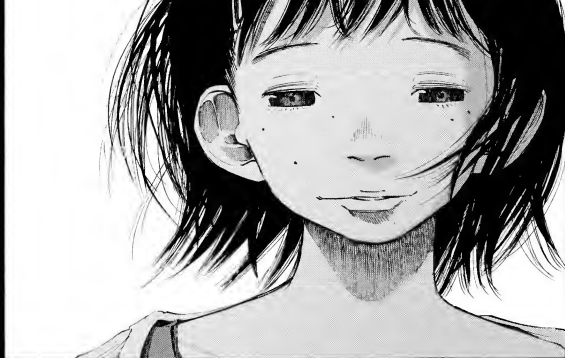
I
NEVER...

...SHOULD
HAVE
TOUCHED
HER.



...AND TO
DESTROY.









"WHAT
GOD?"

THAT'S
WHEN I
THOUGHT...



I WANTED
TO KNOW
ABOUT HER
GOD.

...WHETHER
GOD EXISTS
OR NOT.

AND I
DIDN'T
MEAN...



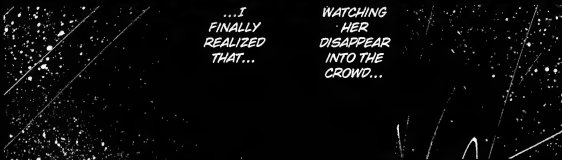
MAYBE
HUMAN
NATURE
WOULD MAKE
US CLING TO
IT ANYWAY.

LET'S SAY
THE ENTITY
WE CALL
GOD TURNS
OUT TO BE A
DEMON.



...SEEMED
JUST A
LITTLE
MORE
DISTORTED
THAN
USUAL.

AS SOON
AS THAT
THOUGHT
CROSSED
MY MIND,
THE SCENE
BEFORE
ME...



...I
FINALLY
REALIZED
THAT...

WATCHING
HER
DISAPPEAR
INTO THE
CROWD...



...THE
MOMENT
I MET
HER...

...I HAD
FALLEN
IN LOVE
WITH HER.



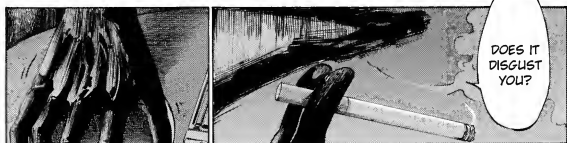
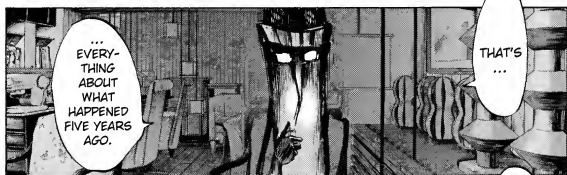
...SHE'D
RETURN TO
ME FROM THE
DEPTHS OF THE
CROWD.

IT
FELT LIKE
IF I CALLED
HER NAME...



...I
NEVER
KNEW HER
NAME.

BUT...

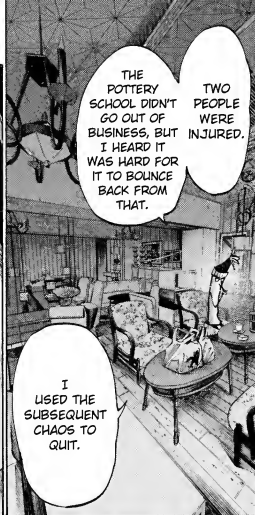




IT'S
BEEN
FIVE
YEARS
...

THINGS
WENT SOUR
WITH MY
GIRLFRIEND
AFTER THAT,
AND WE
BROKE UP.

I'VE
LIVED
WITHOUT
HELP,
WITHOUT
BELIEFS...
WITHOUT
THINKING.



THE
POTTERY
SCHOOL DIDN'T
GO OUT OF
BUSINESS, BUT
I HEARD IT
WAS HARD FOR
IT TO BOUNCE
BACK FROM
THAT.

TWO
PEOPLE
WERE
INJURED.

I
USED THE
SUBSEQUENT
CHAOS TO
QUIT.



WHAT
REASON
IS THERE
TO GO ON
LIVING IN
LIGHT OF
THAT?

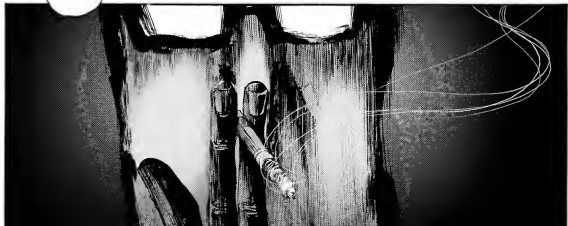
PEOPLE
PIERCING
EACH
OTHER
WITH THE
THORNS
OF THEIR
EGOS...

...JUST
DON'T
UNDER-
STAND.

I...



PEOPLE
ARE...





I
HATE...



I
LIKE
YOU.

I
LIKE YOU,
YUICHI.

NO
MATTER
WHAT
HAPPENED
BACK
THEN...

...I LIKE
WHO YOU
ARE NOW.



YOU DON'T
WANT TO
GET HURT,
RIGHT?



THAT'S
NOT
TRUE!



I...

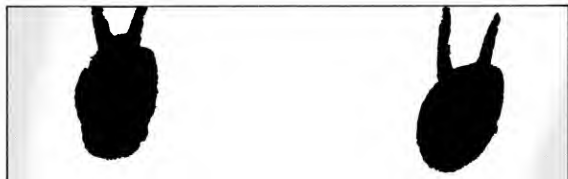
...I
DON'T
WANT
TO HURT
YOU.



LET'S
GO TO
THE
POTTERY
SCHOOL
...

...
WHERE
YOU
USED TO
WORK.

LET'S
GO.





WHO CARES?

HO HO HO ...

OH DEAR.

WAS HE IN AN ACCIDENT ...?



I WONDER WHEN YUICHI IS COMING HOME?

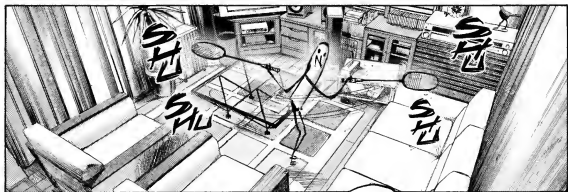
I ASKED HIM TO GO SHOPPING THIS AFTERNOON, AND IT'S ALREADY AFTER SEVEN.



GAH, THAT SWISHING SOUND IS GETTING ON MY NERVES!



RUNNING LOW ON BOOZE REALLY BRINGS OUT MY ANXIETIES.



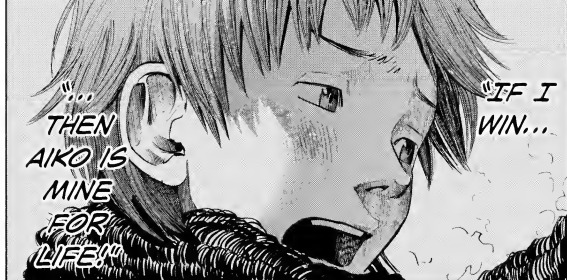
Punpun was aware of that, but something was bursting out of him, and he couldn't hold it back.



HEY, YOU'RE NOT EVEN AN ALTERNATE, ARE YOU?

IS THERE A POINT TO ALL THAT SWINGING? WHY DON'T YOU JUST GO TO BED?

Punpun was swinging away in preparation for the badminton tournament the next day.



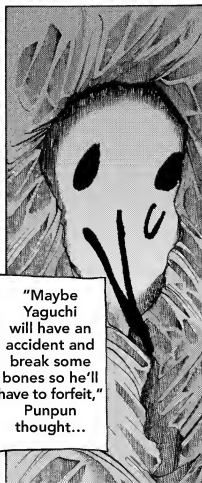
There was no way Punpun was going to hand Aiko over to someone who'd let a first-year curse him out!

"Yo, Yaguchi!"

"I'm going to call him names in my head!"

"What a selfish asshole!"

"For fuck's sake!"



"Maybe Yaguchi will have an accident and break some bones so he'll have to forfeit," Punpun thought...

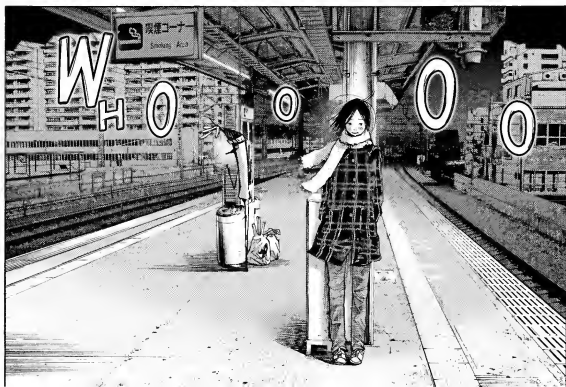


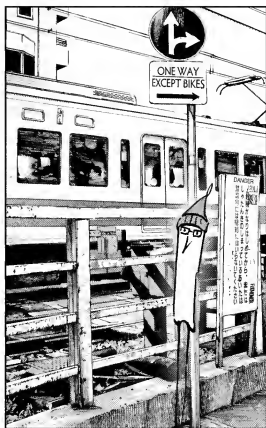
...Punpun But... actually didn't have the foggiest idea what to do.



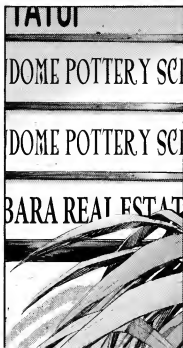
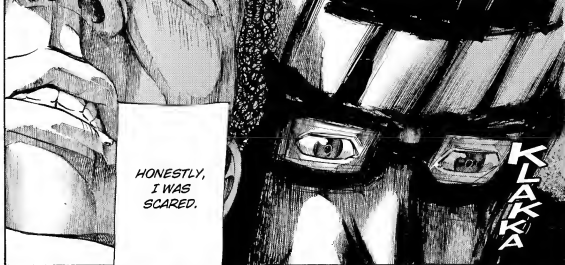
...so he
decided
to stop
thinking
about it.

And really,
that was just
too much...











IT WAS
SO CHAOTIC
BACK THEN—
I DIDN'T EVEN
ASK YOU WHY
YOU WERE
QUITTING.

I WAS
ACTUALLY
PRETTY
WORRIED
ABOUT YOU,
YUICHI.

WELL, I'M
SO GLAD TO
SEE YOU.
IT'S BEEN
A LONG
TIME...



IT'S
GREAT TO
SEE YOU
LOOKING
SO WELL.

I NEVER
THOUGHT
YOU'D TURN
UP AGAIN
WITH SUCH
A CUTE
GIRL-
FRIEND.



HE'S
REALLY
TURNED
HIS LIFE
AROUND.

ACTUALLY,
WASHIO
COMES TO
VISIT FROM
TIME TO
TIME.

UM...
WELL...

HE WON'T
TALK ABOUT
WHAT
HAPPENED,
BUT HE'S
SMILING
MORE THAN
HE USED
TO.

...YES.



BUT
I HEARD
MRS. YAGI'S
DAUGHTER
MADE HER
STOP.

HER
INJURIES
WEREN'T
SERIOUS, BUT IF
SHE HAD SUED,
WE WOULDN'T
BE AROUND
ANYMORE.



UM...
WHAT
ABOUT
MRS.
YAGI?

YEAH, WE
WERE IN
MEDIATION
FOR A
LONG TIME
OVER THAT.



YOU
REMEMBER,
MRS. YAGI
STARTED
BRINGING
HER RIGHT
BEFORE IT
HAPPENED

...

THE PALE
GIRL WITH
THE SHORT
HAIR.

HUH?



...SOME OF
THE STUDENTS
MENTIONED
THAT SHE'S
STUDYING
POTTERY
AT AN ART
COLLEGE IN
KYOTO NOW.

OH
YEAH...

I
DONT KNOW
WHY SHE
DEFENDED
US.



OH, THIS
IS A NICE
CUP.

NOTHING.



HMM?
WHAT'S
WRONG?

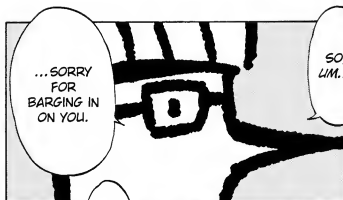


THEY'RE
WASHIO'S
COMEBACK,
AFTER FIVE
LONG YEARS.



THEY'RE
SMALL AND
ROUGH,
BUT THEY
HAVE A
CERTAIN
STYLE,
DON'T YOU
THINK?

HA HA,
I SEE YOU
HAVEN'T
LOST YOUR
TOUCH.



... SORRY
FOR
BARGING IN
ON YOU.

SO,
LIM...



NO,
NO...

COME
ANY-
TIME.



... I'D LOVE
TO WORK
WITH YOU
AGAIN.

AND
...

... IF
YOU WANT
TO GET
BACK INTO
POTTERY...











...A
COMPLETE
LIE.

THAT
WAS...

...WAS
DEFINITELY
GUILT OVER
THE
MISTAKES
OF MY
PAST.

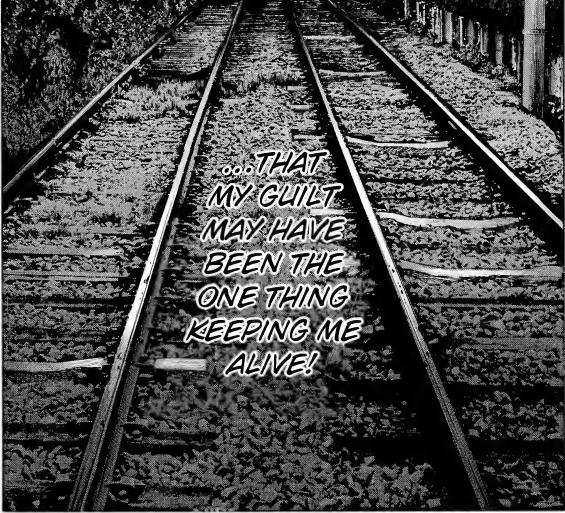
THE
BURDEN
I'D BEEN
CARRYING
FOR FIVE
YEARS...

...SOME-
HOW THE
WEIGHT IS
HEAVIER
AND MORE
PAINFUL
THAN
EVER.

BUT NOW
THAT I
CAN SEE A
GLIMMER
OF LIGHT...

...
BECAUSE
I
REALIZED
...
MY
SPINE
FROZE...

MILD



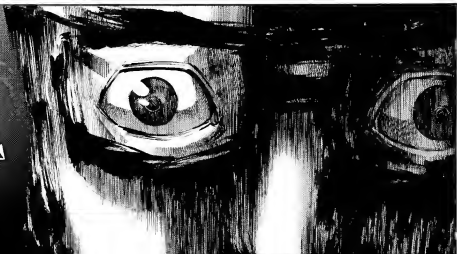
...THAT
MY GUILT
MAY HAVE
BEEN THE
ONE THING
KEEPING ME
ALIVE!

WHAT IF THE
VERY ACT OF
SEARCHING FOR
THE MEANING
OF LIFE IS MY
REASON FOR
LIVING?!

ALL ALONE,
WRITHING IN
AGONY FROM
THE CRIPPLING
GUILT...

UNABLE
TO MOVE
A MUSCLE
BECAUSE OF
TERRIFYING
GUILT...

BOZ
BOZ
BOZ





...THEN
I HAVE
NOTHING
LEFT.

IF THAT'S
TRUE...



MY
PENANCE IS
COMPLETE.



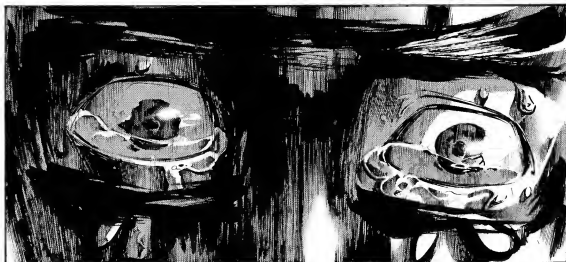
THE
ONLY
THING
LEFT...

...AND
AN EMPTY
FUTURE.

...OF A
MEANINGLESS
LIFE...

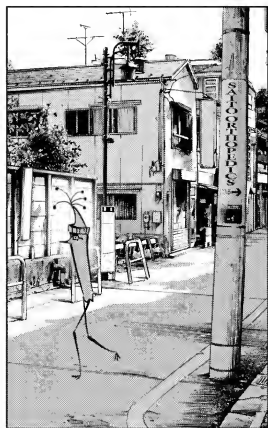
...IS
TERROR...



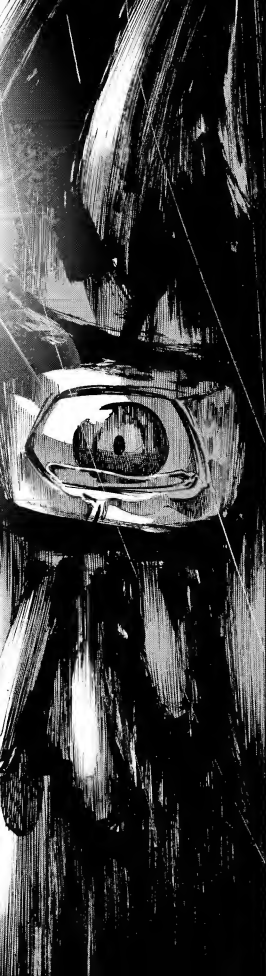


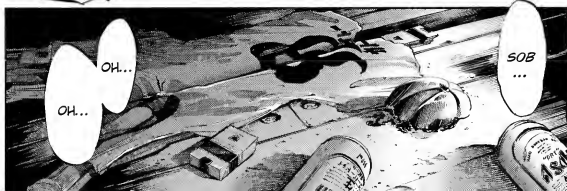




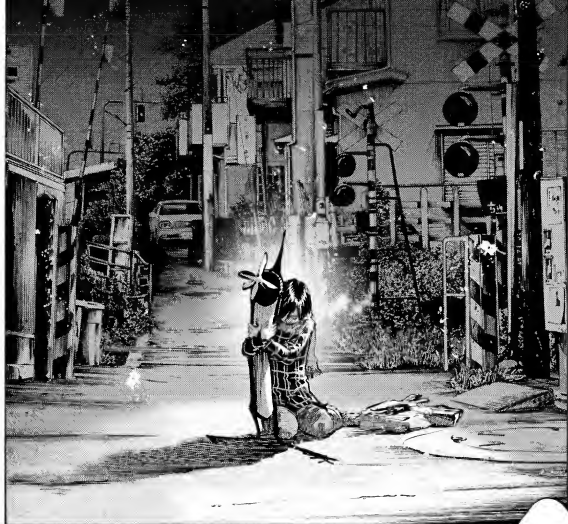












...LEAVE
ME
AGAIN.

JUST
DON'T
EVER...



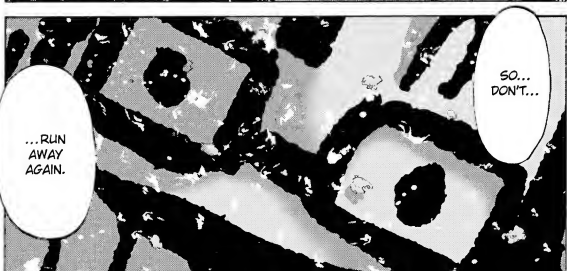
B-
BUT...

...
WHAT...
WHAT
IF...

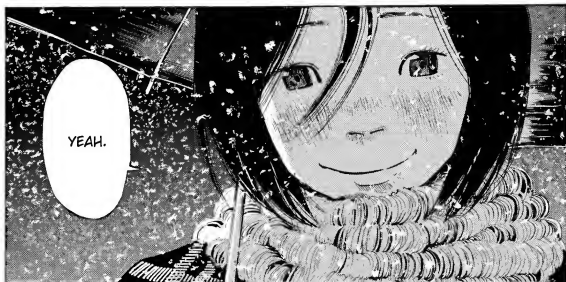
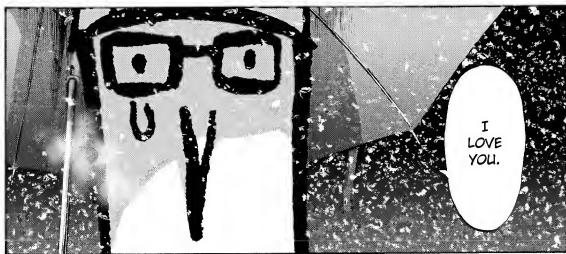
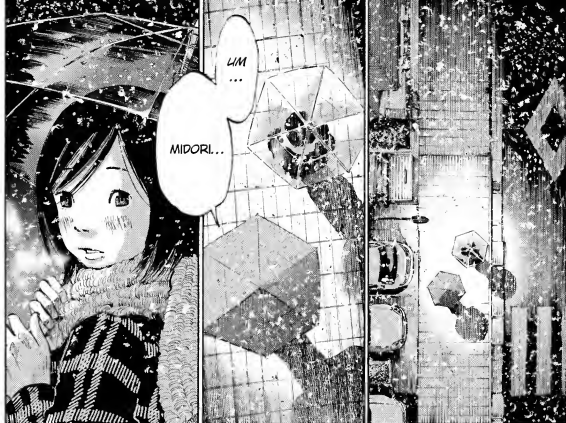


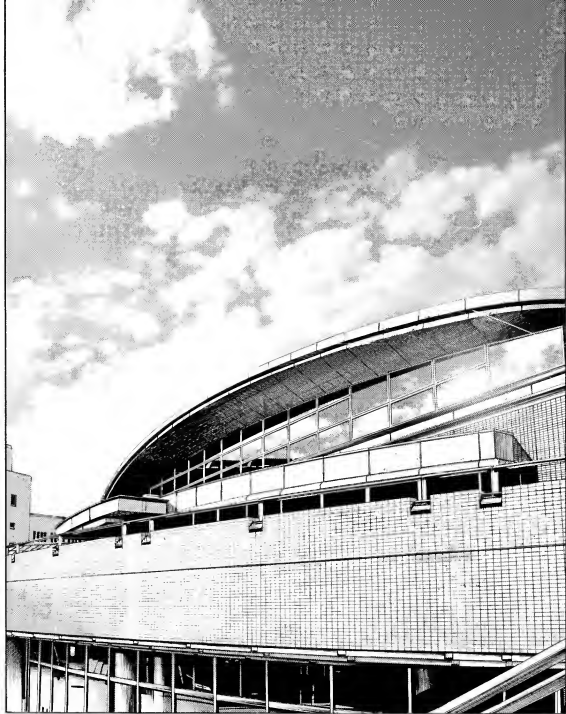
IT'S
OKAY...

I'LL DO
WHATEVER
YOU WANT,
YUICHI.

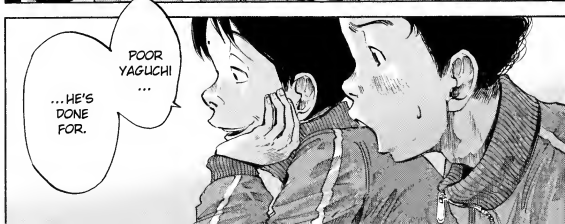
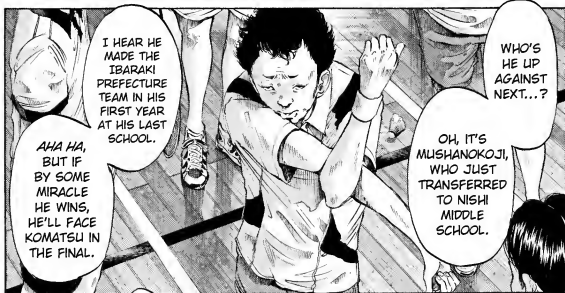








THERN PREFECTURE BADMINTON TOURNA





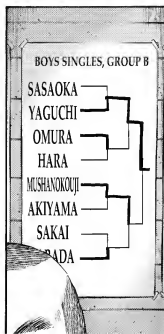
...of
calm
and
cool-
ness.

Punpun's
heart
was a
dark
lord...

...
damn
it...

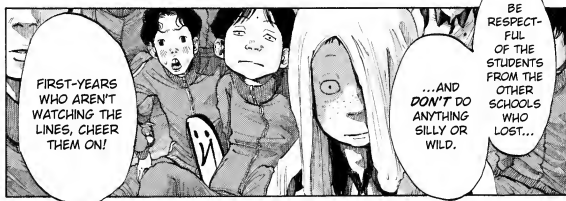
No
need
to
worry
...

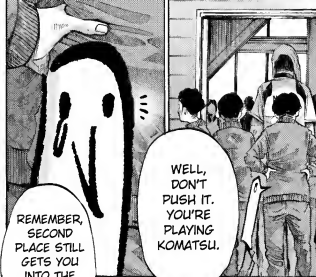
What
...?



LET'S
GO.







REMEMBER,
SECOND
PLACE STILL
GETS YOU
INTO THE
PREFECTURE
TOURNAMENT.

WELL,
DON'T
PUSH IT.
YOU'RE
PLAYING
KOMATSU.



WHAT'S
WRONG,
YAGUCHI?
DID YOU
TWIST
IT?

HMM
...?

NO,
IT'S
FINE.



WHY
ARE YOU
BRINGING UP
ALL THAT
NEGATIVE
STUFF RIGHT
BEFORE MY
MATCH?

SHUT
UP...

I WANT A
NOBLE WIN,
VOID OF
USELESS
EMOTION.

Punpun
decided he
wouldn't watch
the match after
all. He'd go
home, eat a
choco pie and
go to bed
instead.

KOMATSU,
GO FOR
IT!

I
DON'T LIKE
YAGUCHI—
HE'S TOO
COCKY.

SWAT
HIM LIKE
A FLY!

HUH?
WHAT
THE HELL
WAS
THAT
...?
WHAT-
EVER.



MAYBE
I'LL
JUST GO
HOME...

PUSSY,
PUSSY.

EHH...

I REALLY
DON'T CARE
WHO WINS.

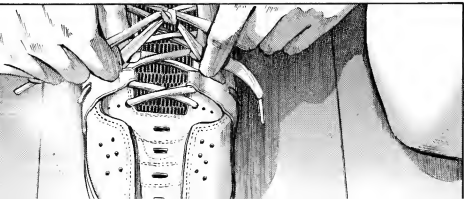






She's
looking
at me!

THE
FINAL MATCH
FOR BOYS'
SINGLES IS
STARTING.





TO THE
CENTER
OF THE
COURT!

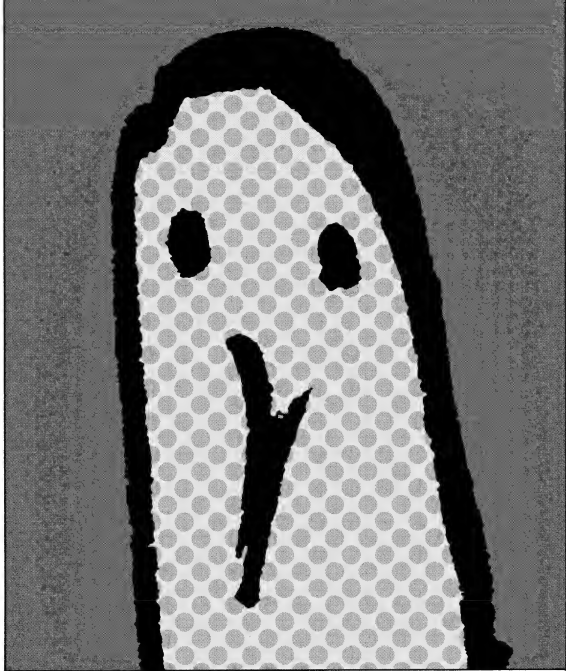




FIRST
SET.







Punpun...



...couldn't
move a
muscle
for some
reason.

...for
so long
before.

He had
never
stared
into Aiko's
eyes...

...in
her
wide,
gorgeous
eyes.

He
wondered
how he was
reflected...





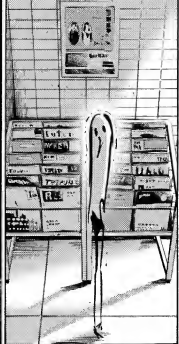
She's still
looking this
way!

She's definitely
looking!
She's totally
looking!

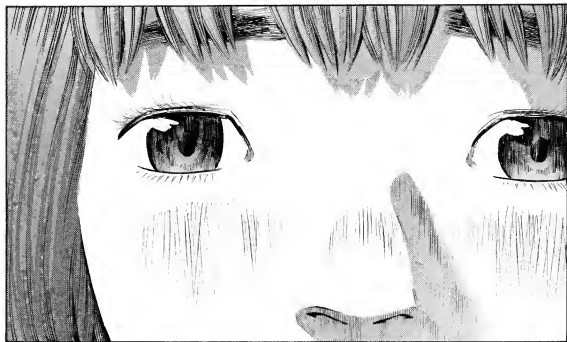


...who
seemed
to have
something
she wanted
to tell him.
Punpun was
powerless.

But it
was all he
could do
to keep his
knees from
shaking
in front of
Aiko...



Punpun
wanted to
run away.



Whoa, if you
keep looking
at me like that...



...MAYBE
I'LL CLAW
OUT YOUR
WIDE,
GORGEOUS
EYES!



...was
ready to
explode!

With everything
that was careening
through his mind,
Punpun...





IT'S
TANAKA
AND
NUMATA.

WHAT
ARE YOU
TWO DOING
HERE?



HEY.



Just in
the nick
of time.



Way
to go,
Punpun!

Actually,
Punpun
was
showing
off how
in control
he was.





Punpun
wouldn't
really have
minded if
Mt. Fuji had
erupted
right then.







NO
WAY.



To
NK



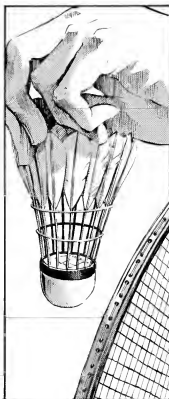
OH,
SORRY.

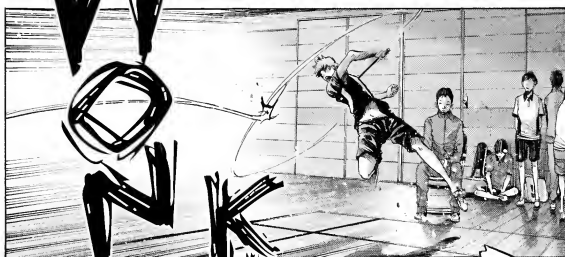


HE'S
ACTUALLY
TAKEN THE
FIRST SET!

WHOA,
YAGUCHI
IS IN THE
LEAD.









Punpun suddenly had a really bad feeling.





...now and
forever,
would
never turn
out the
way he
wanted.

Maybe
his
life...





IN
OR
OUT?

WHAT'S
YOUR
CALL?



HEY...
LINESMAN.



...and then,
depending
on how
things went,
they'd head
to his room
and have sex
and all that.

He'd
smooch
with Aiko
on the bus
home...

Yaguchi
was going
to win, one
way or
another.



SHUP

KOMATSU
...

...IT'S
PATHETIC
TO BE
THAT
OBSESSED
WITH
WINNING.

...Punpun
should
never have
agreed to
the wager.

If he was
going to
be this
pathetic
about it...

That's
right.

WERE
YOU
EVEN
PAYING
ATTENTION?

WHAT?!
IN?!

...IS
INFLUENCING
THE
OUTCOME
OF MY
BEAUTIFUL
WIN!

IT'S
ABSDURD
THAT A
LUDICROUS
MISTAKE BY
AN EMPTY-
HEADED
IDIOT LIKE
YOU...

IT
WAS
OUT.



LET'S
PLAY
FAIR.

IT WAS
CLOSE, BUT
IT'S OUT,
AND
KOMATSU
GETS THE
POINT.

I WAS
WATCHING.

I'm
just a
garnish
for your
lives!

I don't
care
if you
forget
me!

"I wonder
what would
have happened
if I'd lost that
day? Ha ha
ha. Do you
remember the
guy? His name
was Onodera."

"When
we were in
middle school,
I made a bet
on a match
with you as
the prize.

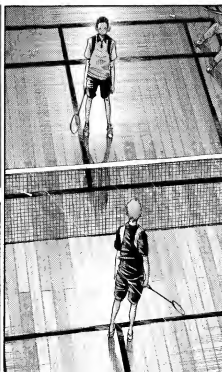
Years from
now, the
always cool
and correct
Yaguchi will
turn to Aiko
on the eve of
their wedding
and say...

Yeah.

...Pupun
thought.

"When I
get home,
I'm going
to cry a
lot..."

Sadness
filled
him.



HEY...



WHAT DO
YOU THINK
ABOUT
PEOPLE
FALLING IN
LOVE...

...AND
DATING?



I THINK IF
YOU ALREADY
HAVE A
LOVING FAMILY,
WANTING MORE
LOVE IS JUST
GREEDY.

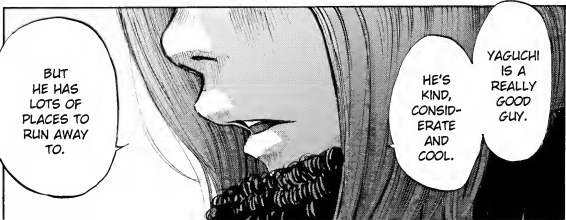


I
DON'T
WANT
THAT.

I WANT
SOMEONE
TO GIVE UP
EVERYTHING
AND JUST
SEE ME.

...YOU'LL
NEVER BE
ANYTHING
MORE THAN
OUTSIDERS
TO EACH
OTHER.

EVEN IF
YOU BECOME
BOYFRIEND
AND GIRL-
FRIEND, NO
MATTER HOW
MUCH YOU
LOVE EACH
OTHER...



BUT
HE HAS
LOTS OF
PLACES TO
RUN AWAY
TO.

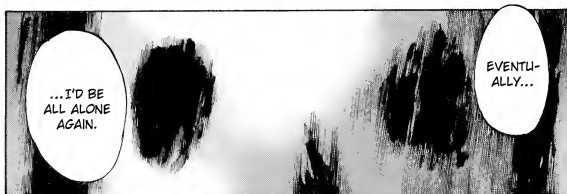
HE'S
KIND,
CONSID-
ERATE
AND
COOL.

YAGUCHI
IS A
REALLY
GOOD
GUY.



...EVEN IF I
WEREN'T HERE,
HE'D BE HAPPY
BY HIMSELF.

I
THINK...



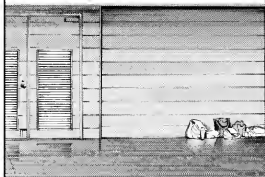
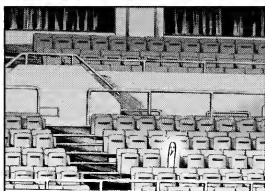
...I'D BE
ALL ALONE
AGAIN.

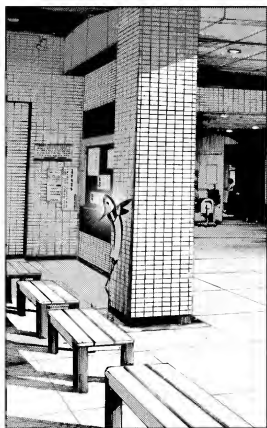
EVENTU-
ALLY...

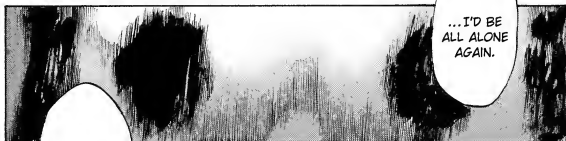


...HOW
I FEEL,
PUNPUN?

DO YOU
UNDER-
STAND...



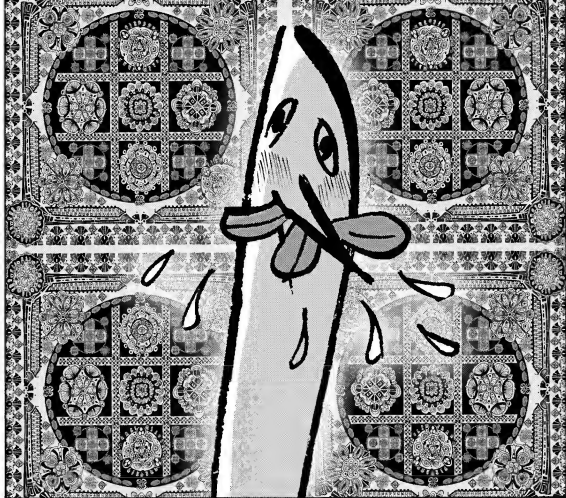




...had
inadvertently
caused Punpun
to become...

The
warmth
of Aiko's
hand...

Understand
...?!



...very
excited!





I KNOW
YOU CAN'T,
PUNPUN.
YOU'RE A
COWARD.

JUST
KIDDING
...



PUNPUN
...

...DO
YOU
THINK...

...YOU
COULD GIVE
UP YOUR
FAMILY, YOUR
DREAMS AND
EVERYTHING
YOU OWN
FOR THE
PERSON YOU
LOVE?



...I KNOW I
COULD DO IT.
FOR SOMEONE
I REALLY LOVE,
I COULD DO
ANYTHING.

BUT...



I DREAM
THAT I'M
WAITING FOR
SOMEONE
FOR A LONG
TIME.

YOU
KNOW
...

I HAVE
THE SAME
DREAM
OVER AND
OVER.



IT'S A
MIDDLE-AGED
WOMAN I'VE
NEVER SEEN
BEFORE, BUT
I'M SO HAPPY
TO SEE HER
THAT I PULL MY
FEET OUT OF
THE SAND AND
RUN OVER TO
HER.

BUT THEN,
AT SOME
POINT, I
NOTICE THAT
SOMEONE IS
STARING
AT ME.

IN THE
DARK, ON A
BEACH, I'M
WAITING FOR
SOMEONE...

...FOR
YEARS AND
DECADES.



BUT WHEN
I GET
THERE,
IT'S JUST
MY OWN
REFLECTION
IN THE
WATER.



...AND
THEN I
WAKE
UP.

I GET
REALLY
SAD...



...I
FEEL
VERY
DARK.

WHEN
I THINK
ABOUT HOW
WE'RE ALONE
LIKE THAT
WHEN WE
DIE...



I THINK I
WANTED
LOTS OF
PEOPLE TO
KNOW WHO
I WAS.

I
WROTE
THAT I
WANTED
TO BE AN
ACTRESS,
A SINGER
OR A MODEL
WHEN I
GREW UP.

...THE
ESSAYS WE
WROTE IN
ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL?

DO YOU
REMEM-
BER...



NOW
I JUST
WANT
ONE.

BUT
THAT'S
NOT TRUE
ANYMORE.



I WANT
THAT
PERFECT
COMPRE-
HENSION.

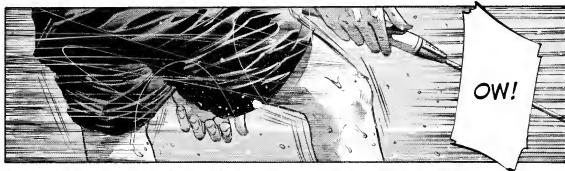
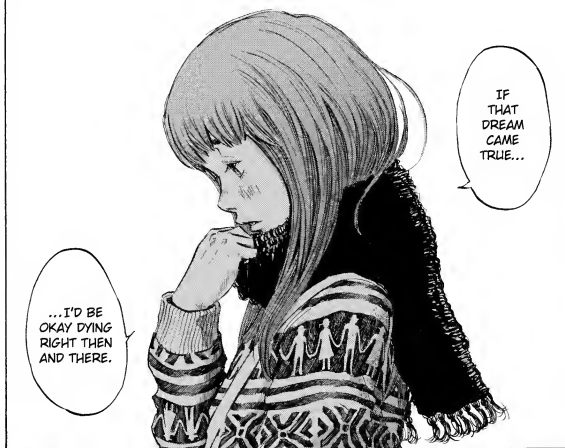
...WHO
KNOWS ME
FROM THE TOP
OF MY HEAD
TO THE TIPS
OF MY TOES,
WITHOUT A
MILLIMETER
OF MISUNDER-
STANDING.

I
WANT
ONE
PERSON
...



...IF I CAN
JUST BE
WITH THAT
ONE PERSON.

I DON'T
WANT
ANYTHING
ELSE...





EVEN IF YOU LOSE THIS MATCH, YOU'RE GUARANTEED A SLOT IN THE PREFECTURE TOURNAMENT. BUT IF YOU GET HURT, IT'LL ALL BE FOR NOTHING.



WHOA, YAGUCHI IS LOSING HIS LEAD.



YOU'RE FAVORING YOUR RIGHT LEG. DON'T PUSH YOURSELF IF YOU'RE NOT 100 PERCENT.

YAGUCHI, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?



...I'M FINE!

NO...



I WASN'T SURE WHAT WAS GOING ON, BUT I DIDN'T LIKE HOW HE WAS GETTING ALL WORKED UP.

HE SAID HE HAD SOMETHING IMPORTANT TO TELL ME AFTER THE MATCH, SO HE WANTED TO MAKE SURE I CAME.

HE CALLED ME YESTER-DAY.



"YOU
DON'T
NEED TO
GO TO THE
GAME..."

SO I
SAID TO
HIM...

"JUST RUN
AWAY WITH
ME."



HE
LAUGHED
AND SAID,
"WHAT ARE
YOU TALKING
ABOUT?"



PAY
ATTENTION—
THIS IS
A GREAT
MATCH!

AIKO,
WHAT
ARE YOU
MUTTERING
ABOUT
OVER
THERE...?



WE
LIVE...

THAT'S
WHEN I
FINALLY
KNEW...

"So
Aiko..."

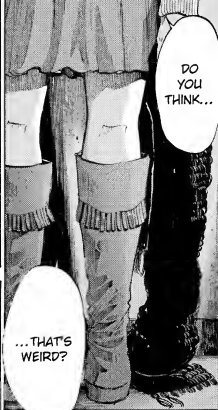
...IN
COMPLETELY
DIFFERENT
WORLDS.



"...Aiko "So
wants..." Aiko...

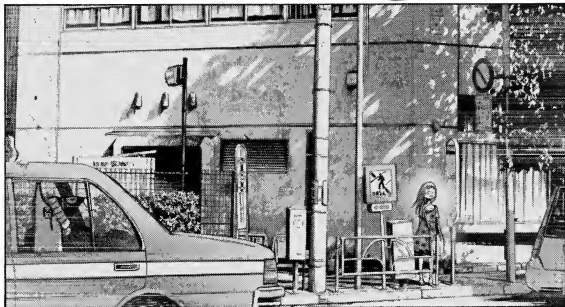
NO...

YOU
UNDER-
STAND,
RIGHT,
PUNPUN?



DO
YOU
THINK...

...THAT'S
WEIRD?



"...waiting
for
someone
to come
get her?"

"Is
she
still..."

"...with her
bag slung
over her
shoulder, full
of things for
Kagoshima..."

"That day
in front of
town hall..."



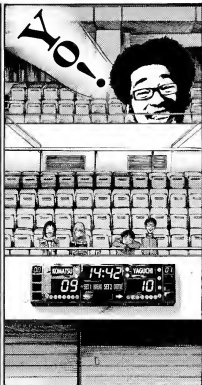
That's the
chant that
makes God
appear.

Dear God,
dear God,
tinkle hoy...

"If I
squeeze
Aiko's
hand right
now..."



But there
was no
need to
chant it
anymore.
Now he
just turned
up.



"Actually,
she might
let me
smooch
her...

"...or even
let me see,
you know,
inside her
underwear.

Here!



"...she
might
forgive
me for not
keeping
my promise
back then."



Yo,
yo.



"...she
loves
me
again."



"She
might
tell me..."

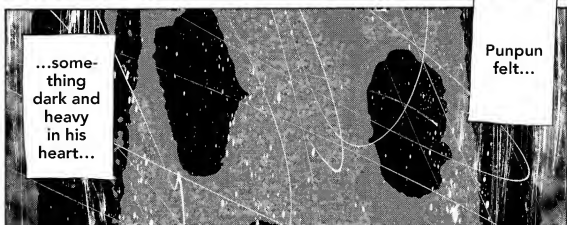
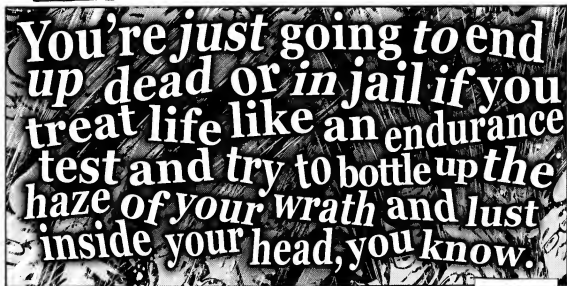
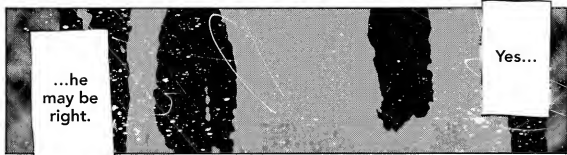
He was
nothing
if not
logical.

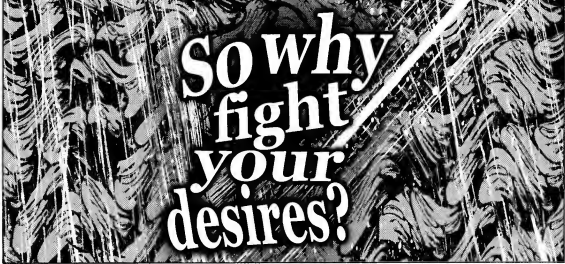
...and to
ignore that
and make
a move on
Aiko now
would make
Punpun a
snake.

Punpun had
a bet or
promise or
whatever
it was with
Yaguchi...

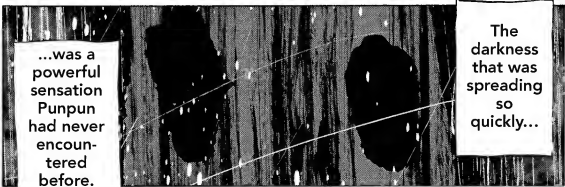
But
here's
the
thing...







**So why
fight
your
desires?**



...was a
powerful
sensation
Punpun
had never
encoun-
tered
before.

The
darkness
that was
spreading
so
quickly...



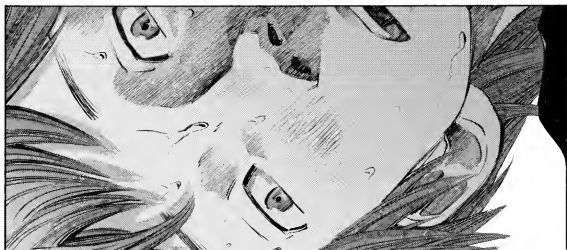
**Just
descend
as deep
as you
can go.**



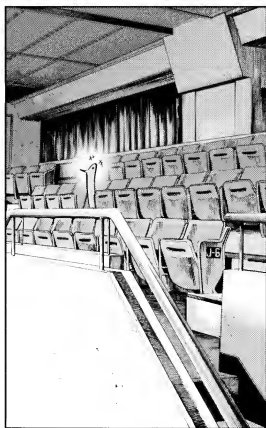
...he was
floating
aimlessly
in space.

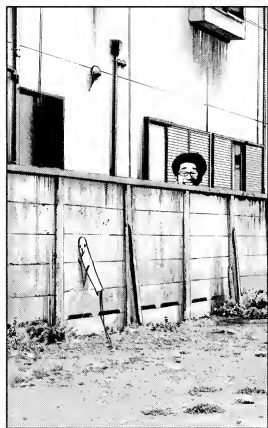
It
felt
like...

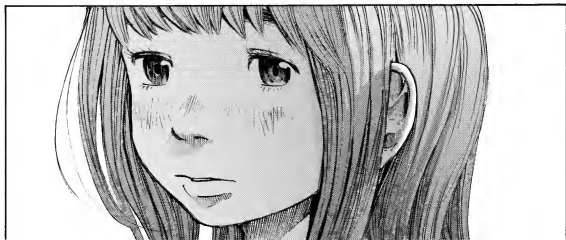
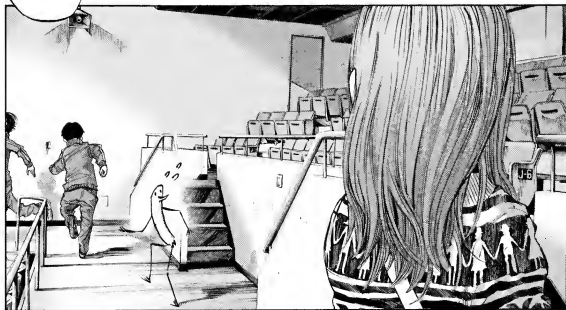














CHRONIC
INFLAMMA-
TION OF THE
ACHILLES
TENDON...?

WHY
DIDN'T
YOU SAY
SOME-
THING?

NO
WONDER
HE WAS
FAVORING
HIS RIGHT
LEG.



THERE
WAS STILL
THE PRE-
FECTURE
TOURNA-
MENT...

HE
HAD NO
REASON
TO PUSH
SO HARD
TO WIN
THIS MATCH.

YAGUCHI
IS DONE.



YOU MUST
HAVE PUT
SUDDEN
STRESS ON
YOUR LEFT
SIDE.

IF YOUR
TENDON IS
SEVERED,
YOU'RE
LOOKING AT
A MINIMUM
OF TWO
MONTHS IN
A CAST.



YOU DID A
GREAT JOB,
MAMORU!

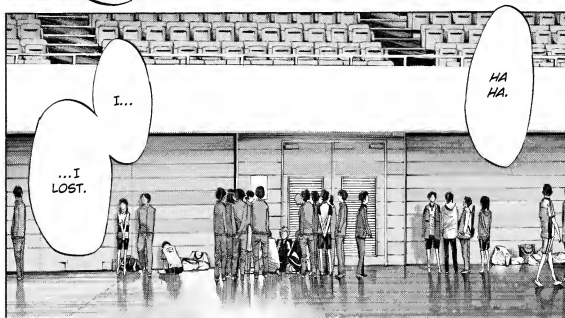
I'M SO
PROUD
OF YOU.



DON'T
TOUCH
ME!



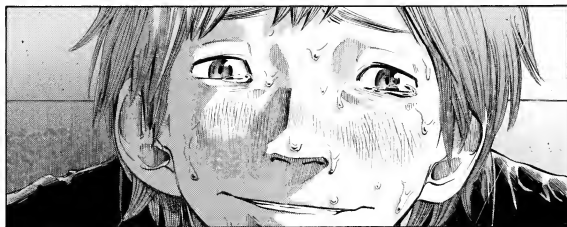
ONODERA.



I...

...I
LOST.

HA
HA.

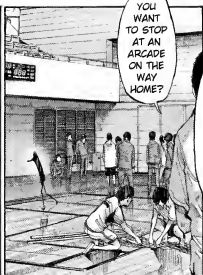




I'LL
GO WITH
YAGUCHI
TO THE
HOSPITAL.

ONCE
YOU'VE
CLEANED
UP HERE,
THE REST
OF YOU
CAN GO.

Punpun...



YOU
WANT
TO STOP
AT AN
ARCADE
ON THE
WAY
HOME?



...wasn't
even
remotely
happy.

...for
some
reason...

It
was too
much for
Punpun.

...he felt
like he had
robbed
Yaguchi of
something
precious.

In
fact...

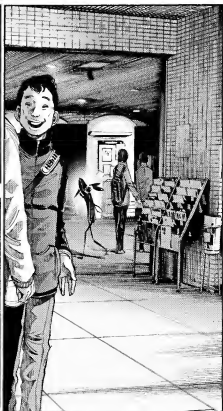
Punpun
was a sly
one.

Pretending
to be a good
person, even
inside his
own head...

No,
that's
not
true.



PUNPUN.



...there
was
another
Punpun
living in
his head.

It
was
as
if...



ARE
YOU
GOING
HOME?

...to the
quick
high he'd
gotten
from
betraying
and
defeating
Yaguchi.

He
didn't
want to
admit...



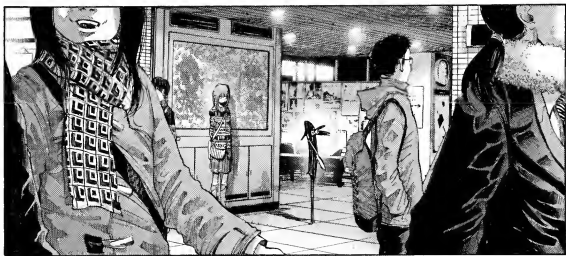
...looked
like a
filthy
animal.

He was
sure his
reflection in
Aiko's wide,
gorgeous
eyes...



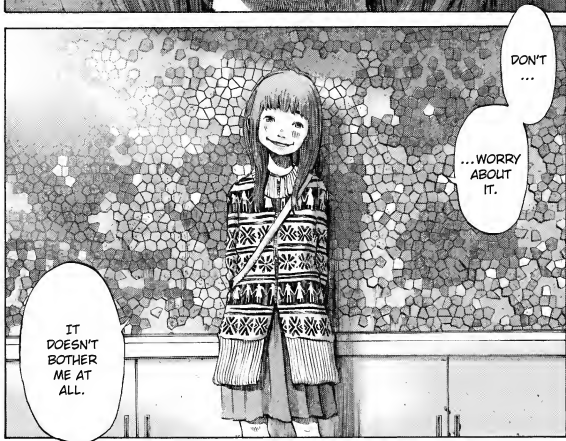
"...to go to
Kagoshima
with you
that day."

"I'm
really sorry
I couldn't
keep my
promise..."



...that he
had wanted
to say that
for two
years.

Punpun
finally
understood...



"Aiko is smiling."



SO...



TO
KAGOSHIMA!

...LET'S
GO
NOW.



Punpun
was...

...he
would
plummet...

...into an
abysmal
darkness
and never
stop
falling.

...YOU
DON'T LIE,
RIGHT?

PUNPUN...

If he
took
even
one step
towards
Aiko...

How
could he
explain
it?



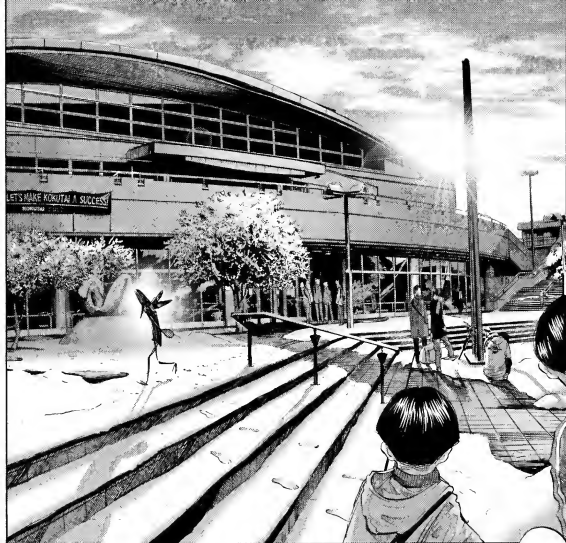
"Yaguchi
needs
you right
now."

"Go see
Yaguchi."



...was too
scared to
look back.

Punpun...



...to high-
light how
dirty he'd
become.

...was
how last
night's
snow was
a back-
drop...

...the one
thing that
was clear
to
Punpun...

For
now...

...and
disap-
pear.

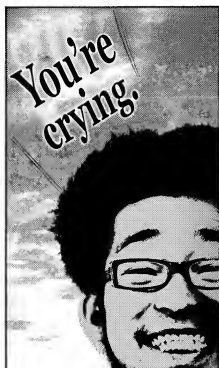
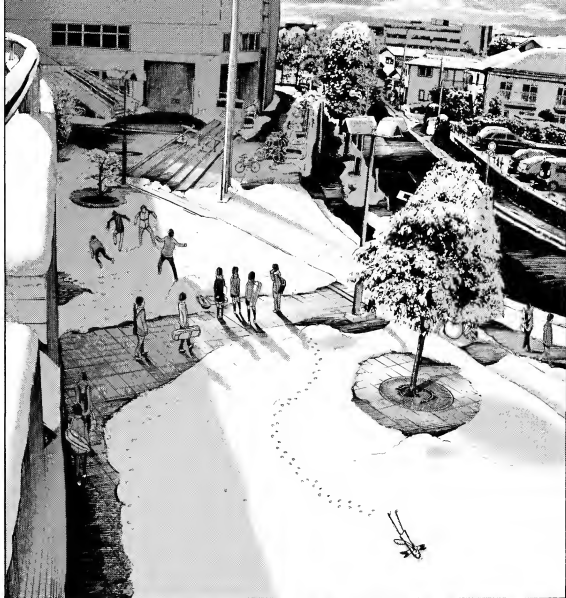
...every-
thing
could
melt into
this clean
white
snow...

If
only...



PUNPUN.

BESTIALITY
OR
NECROPHILIA,
WHICH WOULD
YOU RATHER
DO?



"I'm
not!"



GOODNIGHT PUNPUN

Part Four

INIO ASANO

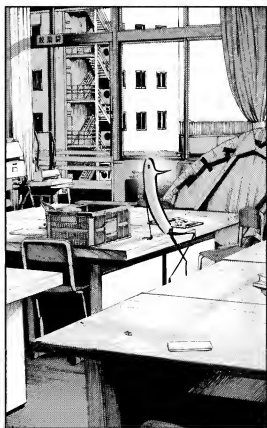


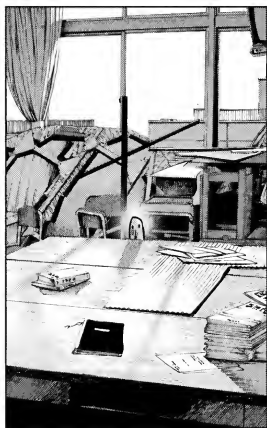


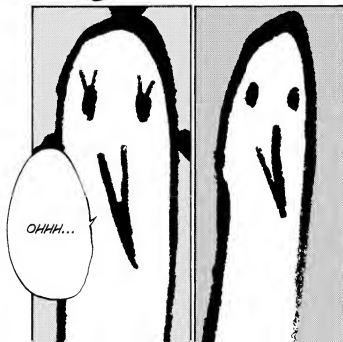
"I'm not
crying!"



"Good-
bye,
Aiko."











AND THEN
WHEN I'M A
SENILE OLD
LADY, YOU
CAN WIPE
MY ASS
FOR ME!

WHAT
ARE YOU
TALKING
ABOUT?
YOU'RE
STILL IN
YOUR
THIRTIES.

MIDORI,
YOU LIVE
WITH YOUR
FOLKS,
RIGHT...?

WHY
DON'T
YOU JUST
MOVE IN
HERE?



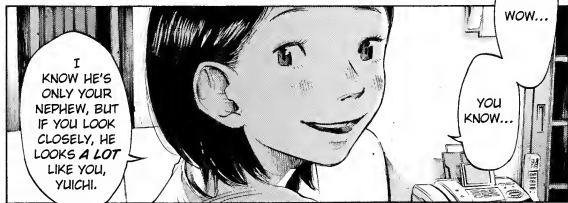
I'M
FEELING
SUPER
WONDER-
FUL!

A
A
A
G
H!



UM...
I'M
MIDORI
OKUMA.

NICE
TO MEET
YOU.



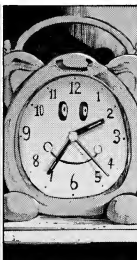


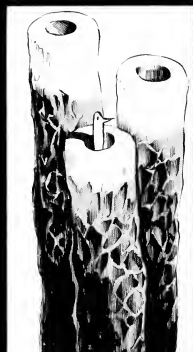
...had been
feeling odd the
last few days.



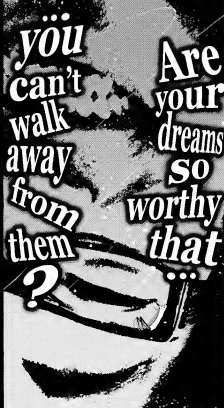
...every
night
he'd had
the same
dream.

Ever
since the
tournament...





you
can't
walk
away
from
them?
Are
your
dreams
so
worthy
that



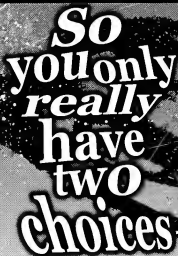
WHEN I
TURN
FORTY,
I'M GOING
TO GET MY
WHOLE
BODY
TUCKED.



you'll
regret
aban-
doning
them?
Is
your
family
so
wonder-
ful
that

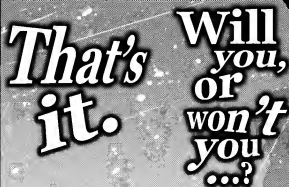


So
you only
really
have
two
choices—



People die,
no matter
what kind
of life they
live. The bit
at the end is
the same
for
everyone.

That's
it.
Will
you,
or
won't
you
...?



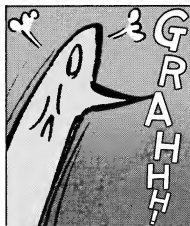


Punpun just wanted to sleep...

He suspected it would be better if everyone in the world just forgot about him.

He didn't want to talk to anyone.

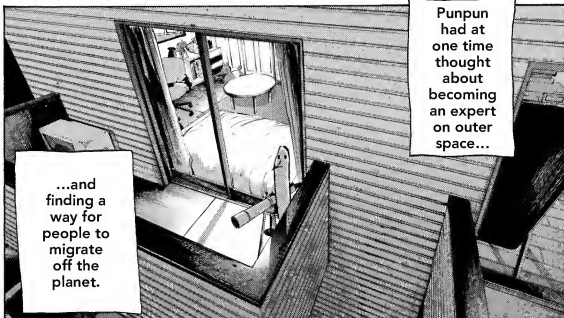
He didn't want to hurt anyone.





"We'll run out of oil,
the environment will
be destroyed
and Earth will be
uninhabitable.
It'll be over
for humanity."

Punpun
remembered
something a
girl named Aiko
Tanaka had said
in elementary
school...



...and
finding a
way for
people to
migrate
off the
planet.

Punpun
had at
one time
thought
about
becoming
an expert
on outer
space...

"I was
such a
child back
then."

Now
Punpun
thought...

When
Punpun
was little, it
seemed like
he'd be able
to touch the
stars if he just
reached out
his hand...

...but
now...

...they
were
terribly
distant
and
wouldn't
even look
at him.



I'M
A MAN
AT MY
SEXUAL
PEAK!

IT
DOESN'T
MATTER...

...THAT'S
NOT WHY
I CAME
OVER.

W-
WAIT,
YUICHI
...



...but
maybe
not.

Humanity
might be
done for...

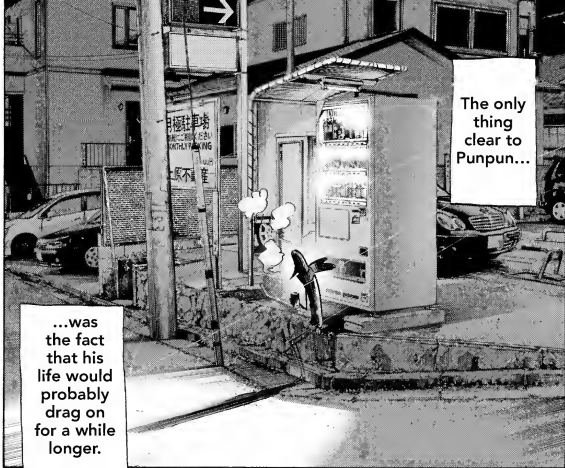
...
YES
...

OH...

MMM.

DON'T
WORRY-
THEY'RE
BOTH
ASLEEP.

BUT
THEY'LL
HEAR US!
THE
SLIDING
DOOR IS
REALLY
FLIMSY.



The only
thing
clear to
Punpun...

...was
the fact
that his
life would
probably
drag on
for a while
longer.



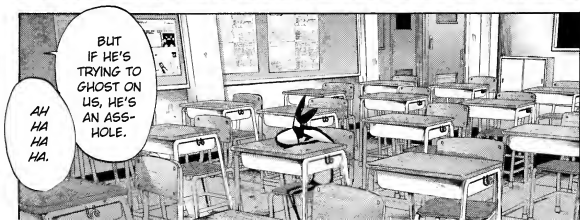
PUNPUN!



YOU'RE
COMING,
RIGHT,
PUNPUN?

REMEMBER
WE WERE
TALKING
ABOUT
GOING AWAY
OVER SPRING
BREAK...?

WE
DECIDED ON
SHIBUYA,
LIKE THE
GIRLS
SUGGESTED
...





IT'S ONLY
THE THIRD
TERM OF
YOUR FIRST
YEAR. NO
NEED TO BE
IN SUCH A
HURRY.

SOCIAL STUDIES REFERENCE ROOM

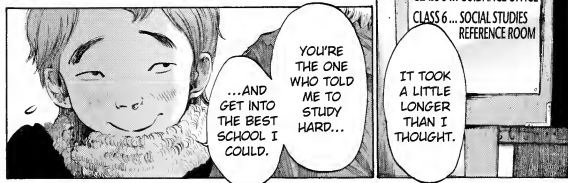
HEY,
SEKI.

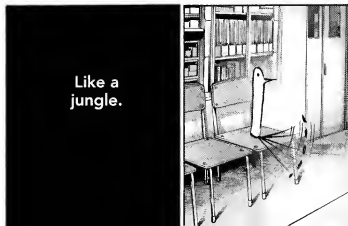
NEVER
MIND, DO
WHAT YOU
WANT.

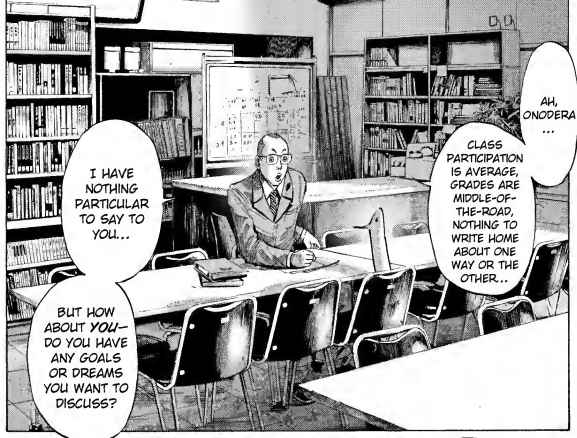
...I HAVE
ABSOLUTELY
NO
INTEREST
IN GOING
TO HIGH
SCHOOL.

AND I
KEEP
TELLING
YOU...

THAT'S
JUST THE
WRONG KIND OF
ENVIRONMENT
FOR SOMEONE
LIKE ME, DON'T
YOU THINK?







"I want to save the world by becoming an expert on outer space."

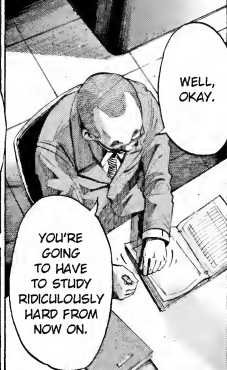
...but nothing came to mind, so he said...





HAVE YOU
DECIDED
ON A NEW
ACTIVITY?

AND I SEE
YOU'RE
QUITTING
BADMINTON?



WELL,
OKAY.

YOU'RE
GOING
TO HAVE
TO STUDY
RIDICULOUSLY
HARD FROM
NOW ON.



GO CLUB
Come experience the
universe that plays
out on the board...?!
Come see
Mr. Mishima in S-2



BUT YOU
SEEM VERY
SERIOUS AND
NOT LIKE
YOU'RE JUST
KIDDING
AROUND. I
THINK YOU
MAY HAVE
SOME EXPE-
RIENCE...

HOW
ABOUT IT—
WOULD
YOU LIKE
TO PLAY
ME?

WE
CURRENTLY
HAVE TWO
MEMBERS,
AND WE'RE
BARELY
DOING
ANYTHING.

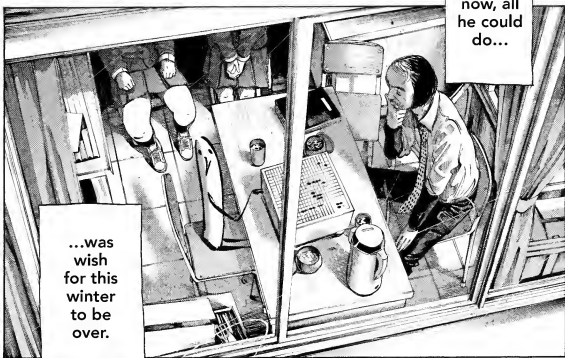
GO
IS REALLY
POPULAR
RIGHT NOW
IN OTHER
COUNTRIES,
BUT NOT SO
MUCH HERE
IN JAPAN.

...was a
little too
cold for
Punpun.

The
towering
vault
of the
February
sky...



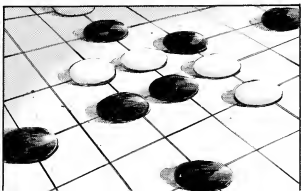
For
now, all
he could
do...



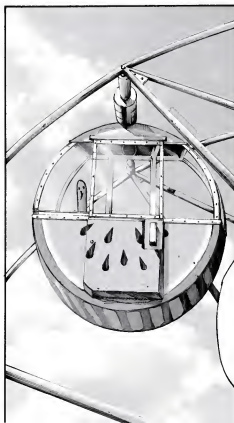
...was
wish
for this
winter
to be
over.



**GOOD
ONE!**







IT'S SO
PEACEFUL
HERE.

YES,
IT IS.

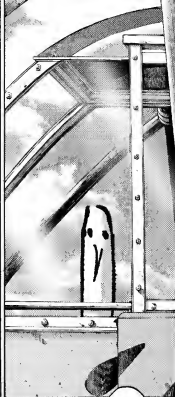


BUT
YOU
KNOW
...

...BEING
SO
EXCES-
SIVELY
HAPPY...

The weather
at the
amusement
park his uncle
and Midori
had brought
him to was
very nice.

The
complete
opposite
of how
Punpun was
feeling.



HEY, HEY,
MIDORI...

...WAS MY
PESSIMISM
CONTAGIOUS?

...MAKES
YOU
INSECURE
...

MAKES YOU
WONDER
HOW LONG
THE GOOD
DAYS WILL
LAST.



...SO
MAYBE
WE'RE
MEANT TO
GO ALL
OUT AND
ENJOY IT
WHILE WE
CAN.

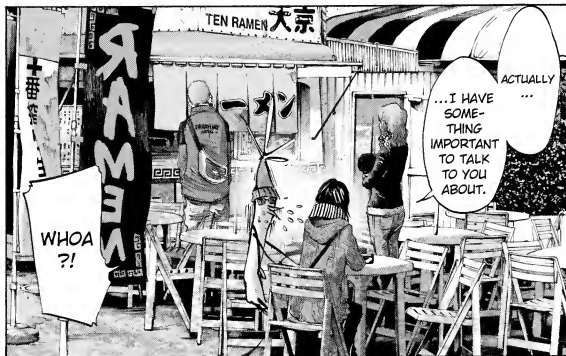
TRUE
HAPPINESS
IS A
FLEETING
THING...



WOW,
YOU
DIDN'T
TAKE
MUCH
CONVINC-
ING!

...YOU'RE
RIGHT.

YEAH
...



WHOA
?!

ACTUALLY
...
... I HAVE
SOME-
THING
IMPORTANT
TO TALK
TO YOU
ABOUT.



OKAY
...

...SO?

OH...

YEAH?

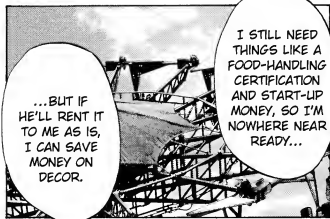


HE
COULDN'T
DECIDE
WHETHER
TO SELL
THE CAFÉ
OR RENT
IT,
SO I JUST
BLURTED
OUT...



THE
OWNER
OF THE
CAFÉ...

HIS MOM'S
NOT DOING
WELL, SO HE
DECIDED TO
MOVE HOME
TO TAKE CARE
OF HER.

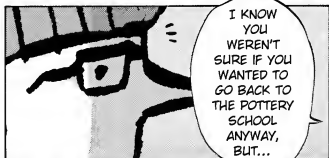


...BUT IF
HE'LL RENT IT
TO ME AS IS,
I CAN SAVE
MONEY ON
DECOR.

I STILL NEED
THINGS LIKE A
FOOD-HANDLING
CERTIFICATION
AND START-UP
MONEY, SO I'M
NOWHERE NEAR
READY...



"WOULD
YOU RENT
IT TO
ME?"



I KNOW
YOU
WEREN'T
SURE IF YOU
WANTED TO
GO BACK TO
THE POTTERY
SCHOOL
ANYWAY,
BUT...

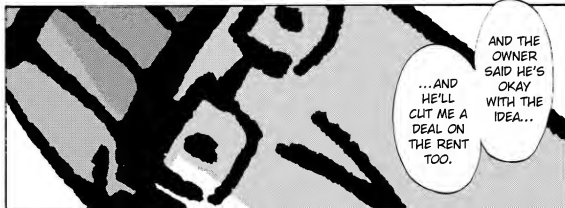


I
THOUGHT
THAT
WOULD
BE NICE.

IT'S
BEEN A
FANTASY
OF MINE.

...WHAT IF
YOU TEACH
AND MAKE
YOUR OWN
PIECES
TOO...

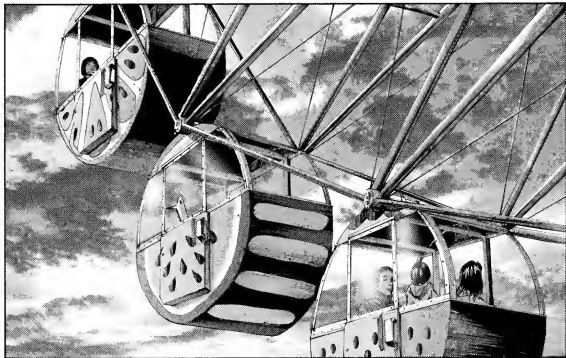
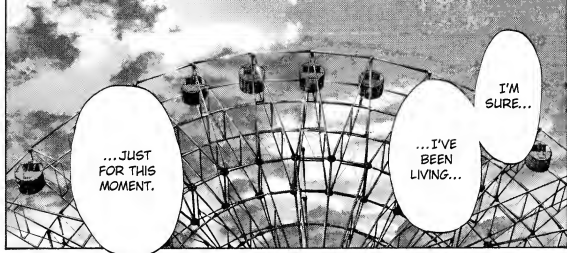
...AND
THEN I
CAN USE
THEM
IN MY
CAFÉ...?



...AND
HE'LL
CUT ME A
DEAL ON
THE RENT
TOO.

AND THE
OWNER
SAID HE'S
OKAY
WITH THE
IDEA...





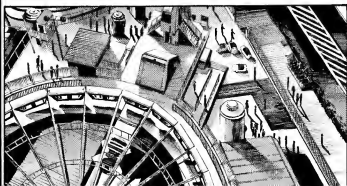
...Punpun was overwhelmed.

When he thought about how each little dot was a life...

...were like little ants.

The people, so far below the Ferris wheel...

LET'S MAKE A PROMISE.





...LET'S
GET
MARRIED.

WHEN
THINGS ARE
GOING WELL
FOR BOTH
OF US...

...Punpun
was just a
piece of lint
or something
else too
insignificant
to notice.

And to
those
looking
up at
him...

...ISN'T
THAT WHAT
YOU SAID
TO YOUR
EX-GIRL-
FRIEND?

OH...

...
HEY
...

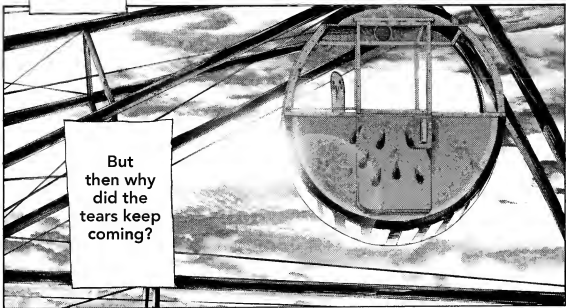
IT'S
REAL
...

...THIS
TIME.



...so that
was okay
with him.

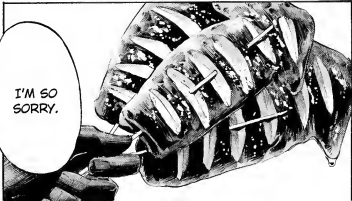
Punpun
was
brave...



But
then why
did the
tears keep
coming?

...but the only
thing that
happened was
the end of
the ride got
closer.

He
thought
and he
thought...



I'M SO
SORRY.





WHOA,
DUDE!
THREE
SQUID ON
A STICK,
JUST FOR
YOU?

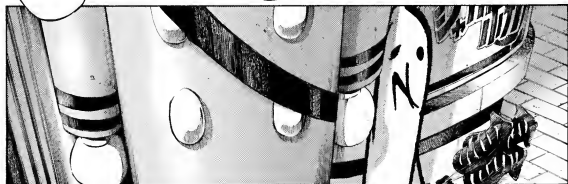
YOU'RE
WILD,
MAN!



WE'RE THE
ONES WHO
SUGGESTED
SPLITTING UP,
AND THEN
WE WERE
LATE MEETING
YOU...

I'M
REALLY
SORRY!

HE
DRANK
TOO MUCH
AND GOT
SICK.





I
THOUGHT
SO.

**PHEH,
DIE!**

OH,
YUICHI
FELL
ASLEEP.



YOU
SHOULD
HAVE
ASKED ME—
I WOULD'VE
TOTALLY
DITCHED
WORK.

BUT
IT WAS
FULL OF
COUPLES.



SIGH...
AMUSE-
MENT
PARK...?



WELL THEN,
WHAT WOULD
YOU LIKE
FOR DINNER
TOMORROW?
I'LL MAKE
WHATEVER
YOU WANT.

OH, IN THAT
CASE, MAYBE
I'LL LEAVE
WORK A LITTLE
EARLY AND
PICK UP SOME
GROCERIES
ON THE WAY
HOME.



I DON'T
KNOW, I
ALREADY
SPEND SO
MUCH TIME
HERE.

YOU
WANNA
DRINK
THE NIGHT
AWAY AND
GIRL
TALK?

SO,
MIDORI,
HOW
ABOUT
TONIGHT
...?



YOU'RE
A GREAT
COOK, SO
JUST MOVE
IN, WHY
DON'T
YOU?!

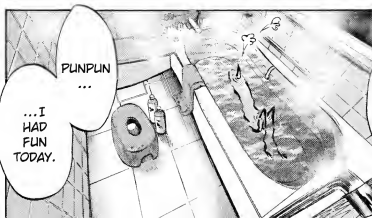
SO
WHAT? I
TOLD YOU,
I DON'T
MIND.



...and he wasn't interested in it at all.

...thought playing family was stupid...

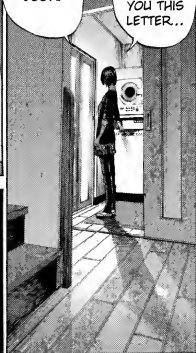
Punpun...





I'M
LEAVING
IT BY THE
DOOR.

YOUR
MOM
WANTED
ME TO
GIVE
YOU THIS
LETTER...



...made
Punpun so
angry he
didn't even
want to
open the
envelope.

The idea of his dad just
happily writing about
outer space and the
Yomiuri Giants without
giving what Punpun
was going through a
second thought...



"I'M IN MY
SECOND YEAR
OF MIDDLE
SCHOOL, AND I
FINALLY HAVE A
GIRLFRIEND. I
SUCCEEDED IN
HOLDING HER
HAND ON OUR
LAST DATE.

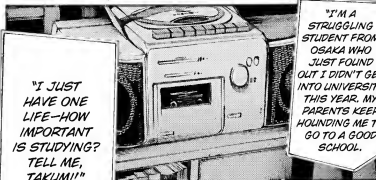
SO,
OUR NEXT
LETTER
IS FROM
SNAKEMAN.



I KNOW
JUST WHAT
YOU'RE
GOING
THROUGH!
WHEN I WAS
IN MIDDLE
SCHOOL...

"BUT JUST
HOLDING
HANDS MADE
MINI-ME
SO HARD I
COULDN'T
WALK
STRAIGHT..."

"WHAT
SHOULD
I DO?
TELL ME,
TAKUMI!"



"I JUST
HAVE ONE
LIFE—HOW
IMPORTANT
IS STUDYING?
TELL ME,
TAKUMI!"

"I'M A
STRUGGLING
STUDENT FROM
OSAKA WHO
JUST FOUND
OUT I DIDN'T GET
INTO UNIVERSITY
THIS YEAR. MY
PARENTS KEEP
HOUNDING ME TO
GO TO A GOOD
SCHOOL."

Punpun
was
studying
hard
these
days.

No
particular
reason.
It was
calming.

...and
then he'd
join an
under-
ground
organiza-
tion
devoted
to
studying
nuclear
power...

Punpun
was going
to study
hard and
get into
the Tokyo
University
science
depart-
ment...

Whee!
Boom!

As if—
that's
a big
lie...!

Then he'd
destroy the
world.

BWA
HA
HA



—Distressed
Angel ☆ Pie

What's
the best
way for
me to
go on?

I have no
dreams.
I have no
girlfriend.

In the
dead of
night, I can
hear my
uncle
and his
girlfriend
doing it.

My
parent are
divorced
because
my dad
was
abusive,
and my
mom is an
alcoholic.

Hello,
I'm a
boy in
the first
year of
middle
school.



Punpun
was truly
saddened
that God
couldn't
come up with
something
sensitive
to say.



**You're the
one who calls
me God.**



**Hey,
what
are you
implying
?!**

...who
are
you? Then...





"I
HEARD BOYS
JERK OFF
THINKING
ABOUT THE
GIRLS THEY
LIKE."



Hee
hee
hee



THIS ONE
IS FROM
TOMATO
PRINCESS
OF
HOKURIKU.

SO, ON
TO THE
NEXT
LETTER.



"WHY DO
BOYS DO
THINGS LIKE
THAT?! TELL
ME, TAKUMI!"

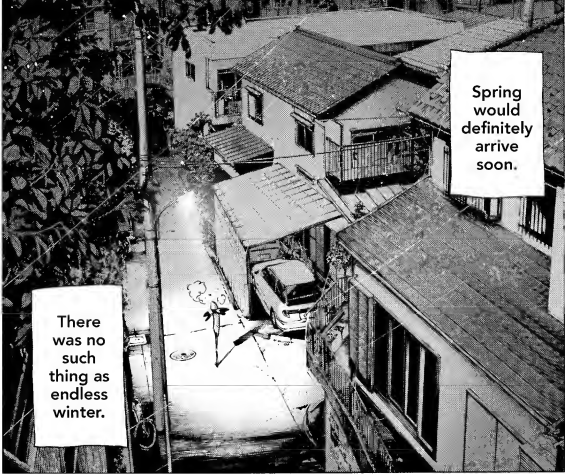
"I CAN'T
STAND THE
THOUGHT OF
SOMEONE
DOING THAT
TO ME! THAT
IS SO
DISGUSTING."





...a bitter wind
was blowing
through the
night-drenched
neighborhood.

Even
though it
was almost
spring...



Spring
would
definitely
arrive
soon.

There
was no
such
thing as
endless
winter.

And if not
tomorrow,
then the next
day or the
next month
or in a few
years...

...there
would be an
unbelievably
wonderful
day...

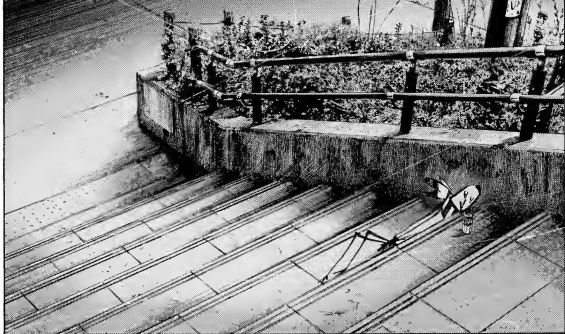
That's
what he
wanted
to
believe.



...some-
thing
unbeliev-
ably
wonderful
must be
about to
happen
tomorrow.

Punpun
was sure
that
because
today had
been so
terrible...





But to
whom?

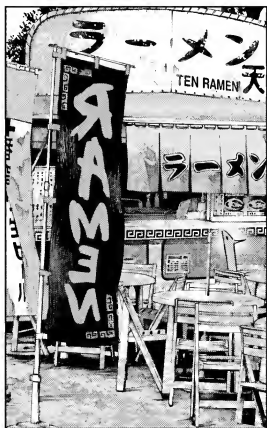
It was
like a
prayer...



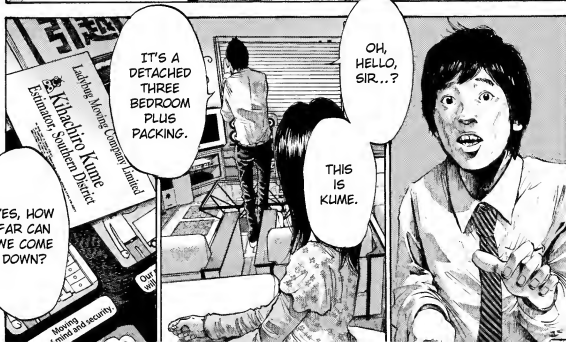
Goodnight,
Punpun.

...just
go to
sleep.

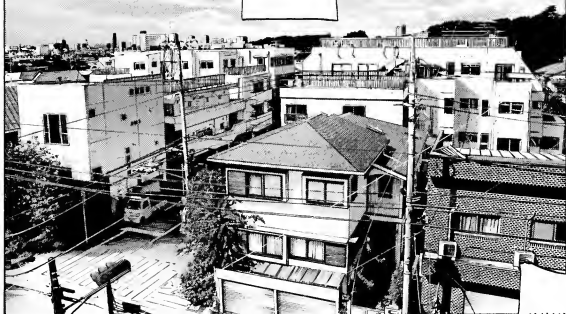
For
now...







Two
years
later



MA'AM
...



KEEP
GOING
LIKE THAT
UNTIL
YOU GET
DOWN TO
\$1,000!



I
DID
IT!



MAMA ONODERA
PUNPUN
YUICHI
MIDORI OKUMA

W-
WHAT
...?!

WHOA!

HOW
ABOUT
\$1,300,
FURNITURE
PADS
INCLUDED.



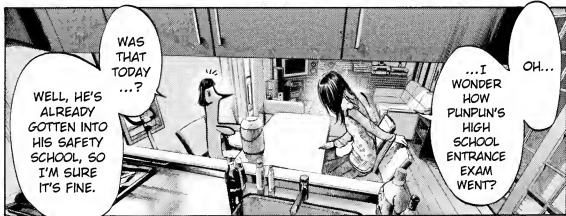


LIKE I
SAID...

WELL...

...I'D
ALREADY
DECIDED TO
SELL THE
HOUSE.

...ONCE YOU
GET GOING,
YOU DON'T
BACK DOWN
EITHER.

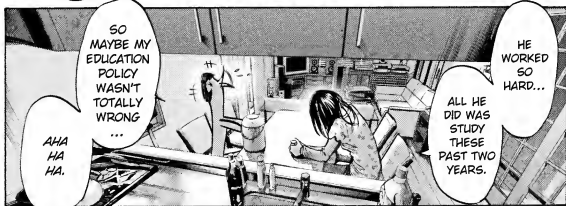


WAS
THAT
TODAY
...?

WELL, HE'S
ALREADY
GOTTEN INTO
HIS SAFETY
SCHOOL, SO
I'M SURE
IT'S FINE.

...I
WONDER
HOW
PUNPUN'S
HIGH
SCHOOL
ENTRANCE
EXAM
WENT?

OH...



SO
MAYBE MY
EDUCATION
POLICY
WASN'T
TOTALLY
WRONG
...

AHA
HA
HA.

HE
WORKED
SO
HARD...

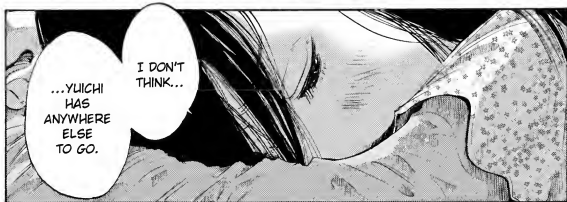
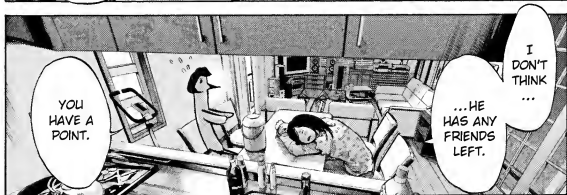
ALL HE
DID WAS
STUDY
THESE
PAST TWO
YEARS.

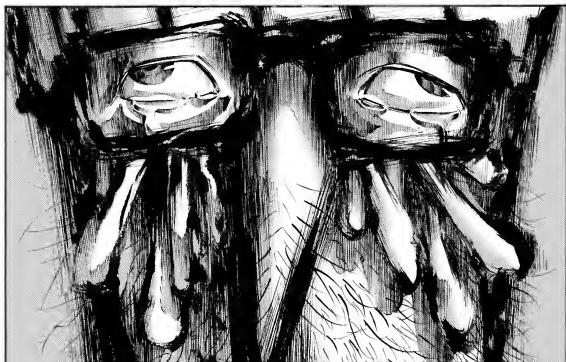


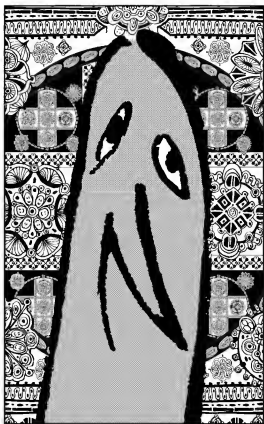
HEY,
MIDORI...

IT'S ONLY
BEEN A WEEK
SINCE YUICHI
STOPPED
COMING
HOME.

SIGH.







GOODNIGHT PUNPUN INIO ASANO
Part Four

BACKGROUND ASSISTANTS: Yuki Toribuchi
Satsuki Sato
CG ASSISTANT: Hisashi Saito
COOPERATION: Kumatsuto
Yasumasa Iwama
Yu Uehara
Takashi Kume

ACHOO!!

ACHOO!

AH...

ACHOOO!

AH...!

ACHOO
!!

AH...!

AHH
...

...
CHOO!

ACHOO!

ACHOO!

ACHOO!



INIO ASANO, a bona fide earthling, was born in Ibaraki, Japan, in 1980. In 2001, his short story "Uchu kara Konnichiwa" (Hello from Outer Space) won the first Sunday GX Rookie Prize. Later, GX published his series *Subarashi Sekai*, available in English from VIZ Media as *What a Wonderful World!* His other works include *Hikari no Machi* (City of Light), *Nijigahara Holograph* and *Umibe no Onna no Ko* (A Girl on the Shore), as well as *solanin*, also available from VIZ Media.

GOODNIGHT PUNPUN

Volume 2

VIZ Signature Edition

Story and Art by INIO ASANO



OYASUMI PUNPUN Vol. 3, 4

by Inio ASANO

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